



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

City Clears the Way for More Restaurants on 24th Street

Issue Will Be Aired at Community Meeting Feb. 25

By Corrie M. Anders

Noe Valley diners may soon get to fill their plates with as many restaurants on 24th Street as they want.

That prospect came after the city's Planning Commission last month voted unanimously to repeal an ordinance that for 23 years has placed strict constraints on new eateries along the commercial strip.

The commission sent the measure to the Board of Supervisors. If approved, the proposal would allow an unlimited number of cafes to open in Downtown Noe Valley, as long as they survived a sticky permit process at City Hall.

Before the board acts, however, local residents will have a chance to relish or reject the idea at a Feb. 25 community meeting at St. Philip's Church. Supervisor Bevan Dufty and five neighborhood groups will host the restaurant forum.

On 24th Street in late January, there were many who said they'd welcome an increase in restaurants in Noe Valley—especially if they contributed to the ethnic variety of local cuisine.

"Anything that's good" was what 25th Street resident Wendy Slaughter would like to see: "Burmese, Afghan, or another restaurant that has California cuisine. I think it will be great to bring new businesses into Noe Valley, especially when you're got seven or eight empty storefronts here," said Slaughter.

"Sushi," said Liesl Brown, a Mission Dolores area resident who was shopping with her husband, Andy. "We'd love a good sushi restaurant in the neighbor-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

A Lovebird's Story

When Siri Met Leslie at the Animal Company

By Heather World

Siri is in love. While lovebirds across Noe Valley share dinner and kisses this Valentine's Day, she will be standing on one foot and making a chewing sound.

That's because Siri, a recent resident of the Animal Company on 24th Street, is a true lovebird, the kind with beak and feathers, and when she moves her beak back and forth and chews softly while standing on one leg, she's telling her new "mom," Leslie Zwemer, that she's happy.

"She bonded to my husband immediately, but she goes to me, too," says Zwemer, noting that Siri has displayed other signs of affection, such as nuzzling her hair.

Zwemer, who teaches kindergarten at

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17



Officer Lorraine Lombardo is a familiar face to most Noe Valleyans, especially those who've dared to make a left turn out of Whole Foods (Bell) Market. Photo by Pamela Gerard

Officer Lorraine Lombardo—On the Beat for 20 Years

Bike Patroller Feels Right at Home on Noe Valley Turf

By Olivia Boler

On a Thursday around noon, San Francisco Police Officer Lorraine Lombardo handcuffs her mountain bike outside Bernie's on 24th Street before heading inside the café for a cup of coffee. She's been off duty for a few days, and it's time to catch up with the local merchants and neighbors.

"People see the handcuffs and they know I'm here," she says. "They come in and tell me what's been going on."

For a little over 20 years, Lombardo—known even to the panhandlers as "Lorraine"—has been working the Noe Valley beat. Technically, her job title is Community Police Officer, but the more colloquial term "beat cop" suits her fine, too.

Lombardo explains that her beat—the territory she covers—stretches loosely

from Valencia Street to Grand View and from 21st to 26th streets. (Ingleside Police Station handles the part of Noe Valley that is south of Cesar Chavez.) She reports to Mission Police Station and works under Capt. Greg Corrales, who recently returned to the station after a stint in the Police Department's traffic detail.

"I'm usually on 24th Street," says Lombardo, 56. "But I'll respond anywhere I'm needed."

Since Lombardo joined the police force in the mid-1980s, she has seen its manpower dwindle. When she was first assigned the Noe Valley beat, she and another officer, Lois Perillo, would switch off. "That was great. We'd cross over one day, and someone was always covering the beat. Now it's just me."

In recent years, Noe Valley shopkeepers and property owners have filled that hole by funding the San Francisco Patrol

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

Merchants Greet New Year with Optimism

Holidays and Babies Give Local Stores a Bounce

By Tim Innes

While they're not quite ready to sing "Let the Good Times Roll," many Noe Valley merchants are starting 2010 with a spring in their step, thanks to strong December sales and a sense that loyal customers have their back.

"The holiday season was good," said Anna Jatta, owner of the Ark, a toy store at 24th and Vicksburg streets. "The economy has stabilized. People are not as fearful."

Jatta attributed the store's success to a "very supportive neighborhood" that appreciates toys that stir the imagination—castles, pirate ships, and dollhouses—instead of heavily marketed gadgets like robotic hamsters.

Ladybug Ladybug's Rebecca Heller agreed with Jatta's assessment. "Things are definitely picking up. There's less anxiety, less stress."

She said that after a "touch-and-go" period earlier in the year, business at the gift shop perked up. "It seems to be carrying over to 2010," she said.

Heller said the mid-November opening of La Boulange bakery and cafe at 24th and Sanchez streets has been a boon to businesses on the block, particularly on weekdays. That contrasted with the late-September arrival of Whole Foods Market, which increased foot traffic west of Sanchez, but not to the east, she said.

"It's kid-friendly," she said of La Boulange, which draws large numbers of stroller-pushing parents and nannies, who often stop by to check out Ladybug's toy and craft offerings after lunch.

An instant hit, La Boulange has drawn crowds since it opened in the space previously occupied by Noe Valley Pizza. At

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



At five weeks old, lovebird "Siri" is starting to admire the hair and eyes of her new owner, Leslie Zwemer, while being weaned at the Animal Company on 24th Street. Photo by Sally Smith

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THE NOE VALLEY VOICE
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who • what • where

Love, Troop 88



A love of the outdoors and adventure took these fearless members of San Francisco's Troop 88 to Thousand Mile Lake (elevation 9,500 feet) near Bonner Peak. The stop was on their 70 mile hike from Toulumne meadows to Lake Thomas Edison on John Muir Trail. From left, they are Y Bing Yan, Andrew Dotson, Christopher Yan, Jackson Yant, Michael Dotson, Gary Furney, Edmond Chan, Antonio Chacon, Milan Gurung, Brian Furney, and Lisa Kakehashi.

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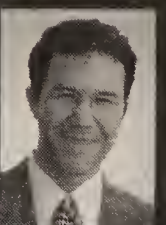
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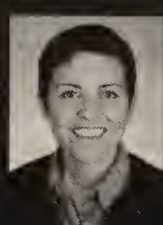
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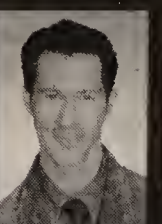
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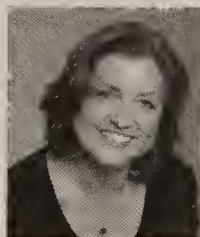
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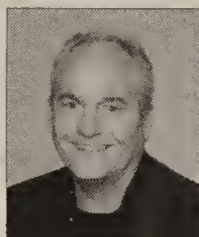
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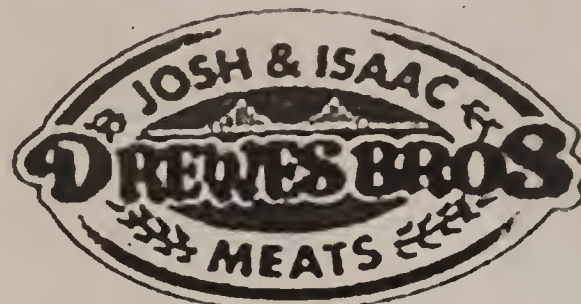
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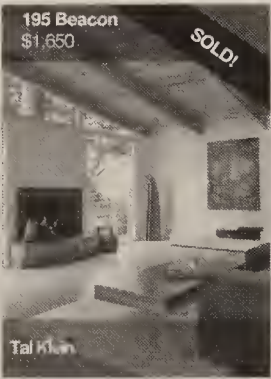
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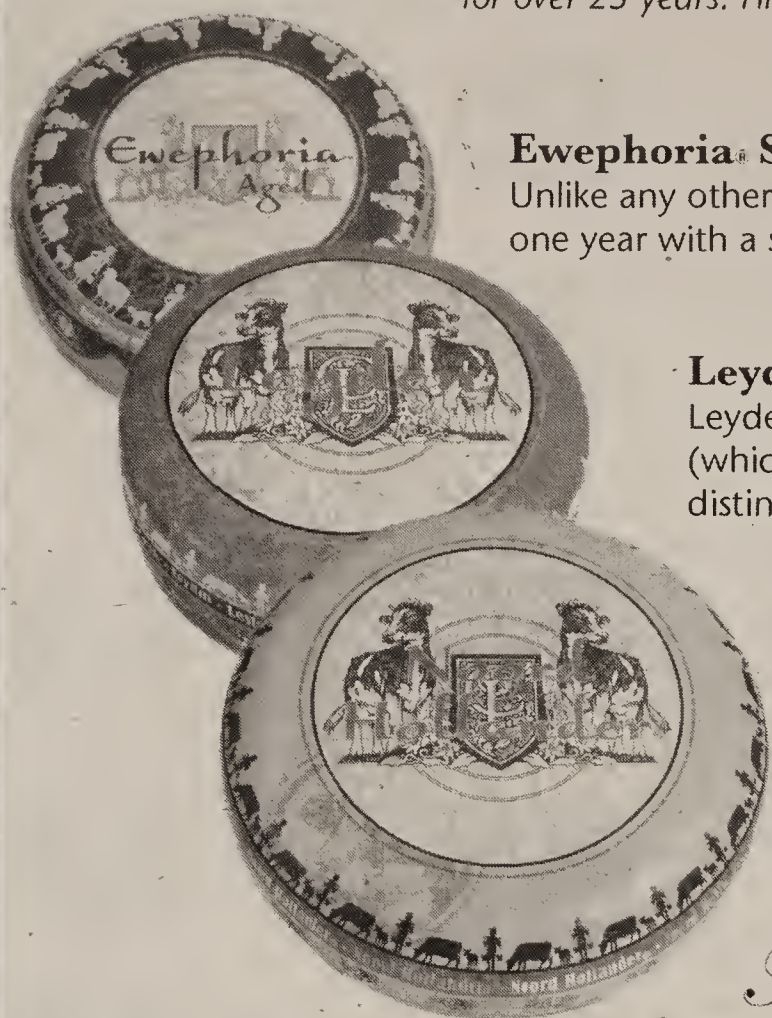
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Star Map

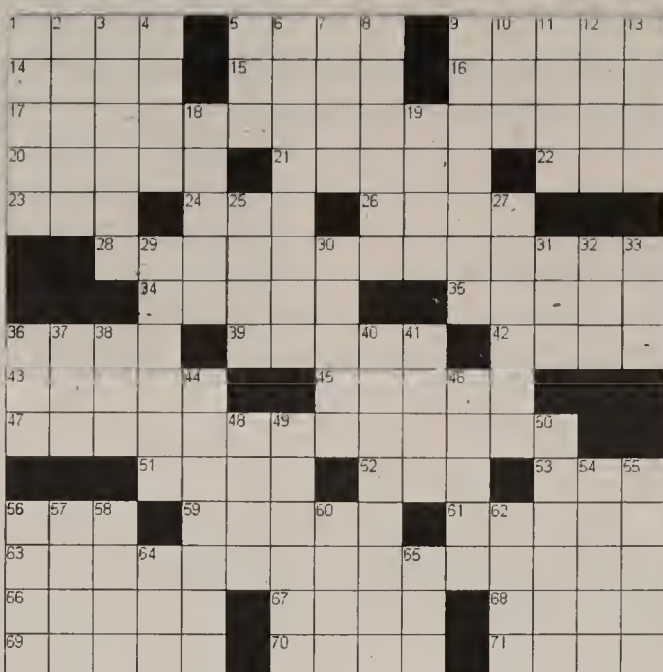
ACROSS

1. Lomond or Ness
5. Bank acct. guarantor
9. Knitting or beadwork
14. Newspaper essayist's page
15. ___ Pahlavi (former shah of Iran)
16. 10:1 or 5:2, e.g.
17. Where Fidel buys his anti-virus programs in Noe Valley
20. Kicking's partner
21. Notions
22. Month, in Mexico
23. Baton Rouge Univ.
24. Beer keg insert
26. Org. opposed to Napster
28. Where designer Stewart, along with her sibs, goes for latte in Noe Valley

34. Showed disapproval
35. Jazz great Blake
36. Cross-legged exercises

39. Base stealer Lou
42. Riverbed deposit
43. Cream of the crop
45. France's major river
47. Where singer Seeger gets his shirts done in Noe Valley

51. Clock face
52. Bleacher shout
53. 90-degree pipe turn
56. Fishing pole
59. Tree, in Tijuana
61. Daytime TV host O'Donnell
63. Where singer Clapton dines in Noe Valley
66. Potato state
67. Enormously
68. "So be it!"
69. 13, to a baker



70. All's antonym
71. Jay who chins with guests

DOWN

1. Homegrown
2. October birthstones
3. Element in atomic clocks
4. Improved-resolution video sys.
5. To and ___
6. Convert from code
7. Company with a crocodile logo
8. Minolta, e.g.
9. Holy war
10. Be a stoolie
11. "Up and ___!"
12. Blaze
13. Flip, as a coin
18. Fashionably outdated
19. Ache
25. From ___ (one step)

27. Bully
29. Lessened
30. Be crazy about
31. Batting stat
32. "Black gold"
33. Filming site
36. Backwoods affirmative
37. Acapulco accolade
38. Backwoods "scram!"
40. Actor Heston
41. Hawaiian roast at 28-Across
44. 1988 NFL MVP Boomer
46. 1960s jacket style named for a Hindu leader
48. 1960s vocalist Vikki
49. J. Crew rival
50. Big Bird's street
54. Bedding and such
55. "___ man put asunder"

56. Nevada Senator Harry
57. "Novus ___ Seclorum" (words on the \$1 bill)
58. Actress Cameron
60. Capital of Norway
62. By mouth
64. Cuban hero Guevara
65. Chowd down

Solution on Page 43

NOTE: The Crossword, including all past puzzles, is now available at www.no valleyvoice.com.

ON 24TH STREET

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, Voice reporter Shayna Rubin asked Noe Valleyans strolling near the farmers market on 24th Street:

What is the most romantic place in Noe Valley?

Cameron Campbell, Clipper Street: The French Tulip is the most romantic place in Noe Valley. It always leads to a romantic night with my wife, Anne.



Psyche Philips, Vicksburg Street:

The most romantic place in Noe Valley is that little bench made out of a tree stump on Sanchez and 21st streets. It's peaceful and it feels like it's not in the city.



Lisa Jaicks, Elizabeth Street: It is a tossup between Martha's Coffee and the farmers market.



Martha's is one because my partner and I are always engaged in deep conversation there. The farmers market is the other because it's a sensual experience. There are lots of nice sounds, colors, smells, and everyone is close and warm.

Bryan Shiles, Elizabeth Street:

Contigo is the most romantic place in Noe Valley because the food is sensual and the wine list is fabulous. It is warm, lively, and comfortable. When I have dinner with my wife, we like to go to places that are casual.



John Peters, Church Street:

Tamasei Sushi is the most romantic place in Noe Valley. It is cozy and so small that you can only go there with one person. My wife and I have always gone for a quiet dinner on a Friday.



Steve March, Jersey Street:

The most romantic place in Noe Valley is Upper Douglass Park—through the fence. There is a great view of the city, and it is very quiet and nice.



Regina Faustine, Hoffman Street:

Upper Douglass Park is the most romantic place in Noe Valley. It is wooded, there's a nice view, and it is secluded.



Cary Rose, Chattanooga Street:

I like to take a stroll to get gelato at Tuttimelon. It is a perfect night if you can have ice cream and romance.



Amanda Meth, Church Street:

St. Paul's Church is the most romantic place in Noe Valley. I have never been inside, but I love the classic architecture. I love buildings built centuries ago and that it is still preserved.



Ryan Wiederkehr, Dolores Street:

My back yard is the most romantic place in Noe Valley. There is a nice bench surrounded by lots of plants.



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The *Voice* welcomes your letters, photos, and stories, particularly on topics relating to Noe Valley. All items should include your name, address, and phone number, and may be edited for brevity or clarity. (Unsigned letters will not be considered for publication.) Unsolicited contributions will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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LETTERS

Remember Posing with Santa?

Editor:

My name is Fima, and I own Fima Photography. In December, I took photographs of children with Santa in front of Zephyr Real Estate on 24th Street. So far, only about 10 percent of parents have come to pick up their photographs.

I want everyone to know that if their children were photographed with Santa, they can come to my studio, located at 1414 Castro Street (between Jersey and 25th) and pick up their free 5x7 photograph.

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Orange Alert in Upper Noe

Editor:

In December, my two cars were broken into three times at Sanchez and Valley streets. The culprits have taken mostly spare change, but they did steal some sunglasses and a gym bag I had left in the trunk. They broke a window one time. I've reported the incidents to the police

and hope that if others have been burglarized this way, they will report the crimes to the SFPD. There's an online form at this link: <http://www.sf-police.org/index.aspx?page=778>.

Since I made my initial report, I've been contacted by SFPD Ingleside twice to follow up on what was apparently a string of incidents. They told me they were aware of an increase in burglaries and had assigned a special problem-solving team to the area.

Meanwhile, a neighbor reported spotting some out-of-place loiterers at 5 a.m. who appeared to be casing houses by observing when people left their homes in the morning. Also, a different neighbor's benches, which were in front of their house on the sidewalk for at least 10 years, were vandalized.

So be on the lookout for people who are loitering around homes, especially in the early hours, and call the police non-emergency number to report suspicious people (553-0123). Lock your car doors and don't leave anything valuable in your cars.

Steve Komlos

Upper Noe

Bike to Marin for M.S.

Editor:

I live in Noe Valley and would like to invite my neighbors to participate in an event that benefits the nonprofit National Multiple Sclerosis Society. The event, taking place Sept 25-26, is called "Bike M.S.: Waves to Wine," and participants raise money for M.S. while biking from San Francisco to Healdsburg.

The cost is \$35 until March 30, \$50 until June 29, and \$65 until Sept. 25, with a \$350 minimum fundraising requirement.

The two-day ride is fully supported, so all you have to worry about is riding from the start to the finish each day. Day 1 leaves from S.F. and heads over the Golden Gate Bridge to Marin County. You'll bike north on Highway 1 and then inland to Rohnert Park for an overnight filled with music, food, and beer and wine from our generous sponsors. Day 2 will leave Rohnert Park and wind its way through wine country, ending in Healdsburg. Both days are 75 miles, with a 100-mile option on Day 1 and a 40- to 50-mile option each day. You can sign up at www.wavestowine.org.

For more information, email info@msconnection.org or call Liz Bernstein of Bike M.S. at 415-230-6678.

Join this great cause!

Abby Weidner Brody

CORRECTION

In the Store Trek section of our December 2009/January 2010 issue, the *Noe Valley Voice* mistakenly printed the wrong first name for Robert Hanfling, the founder and co-owner of Star Magic, the gift store at 4028 24th Street. We apologize for the error, and hope readers will read the corrected story at www.noevalleyvoice.com. Or better yet, go visit the shop—it's currently open every day except Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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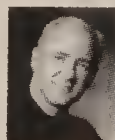
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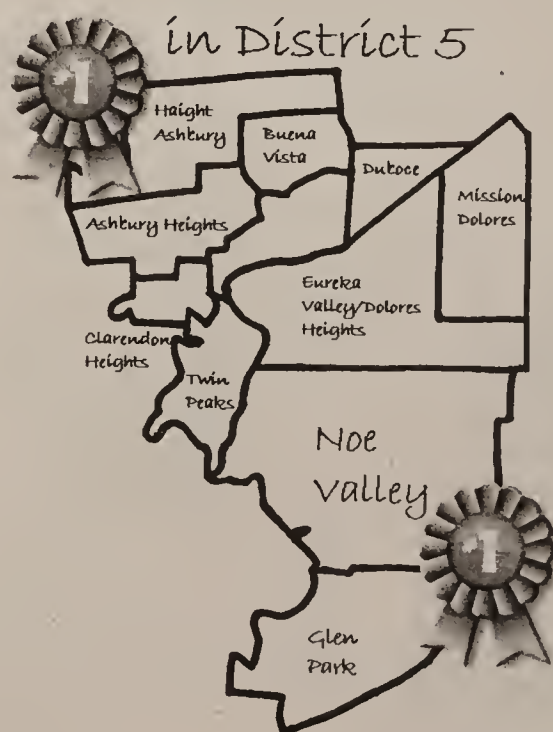
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Happy to Help Haiti. Katy Jones (left) mans a table on 24th Street and offers baked goods that she and friends from Fairmount and James Lick schools made the night before. 100% of her profits were going to the Red Cross Haiti Relief Fund.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

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A Fresh Approach To New Restaurants

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

hood." While they occasionally dine in Noe Valley, the couple said they mostly go out to eat at bistros and cafés on Valencia Street a few blocks away. "Some of the best restaurants in the city are down there," said Andy Brown.

Famished on 24th Street?

Carol Yenne, who owns Small Frys children's clothing store on 24th Street, said that's exactly why she and other merchants have been lobbying the city to loosen the restaurant restrictions. "Why don't we have more nice restaurants on 24th Street? Why are they all opening on Valencia Street?"

Yenne said that over the years she had watched new cafes gravitate to the Mission while 24th Street storefronts stood empty in a tough economy.

"We've lost seven restaurants" since the city imposed restrictions in the late 1980s, said Yenne, a former president and longtime member of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association.

The original zoning law, passed in 1987, put a fixed limit on the number of bars and restaurants on 24th Street from Chattanooga to Diamond (and several surrounding blocks). Since the limit was reached long ago, the effect has been a ban on new cafes—unless an existing food-serving establishment happens to vacate its storefront.

Neighborhood activists at the time championed the tough measure because of fears that trendy restaurants and nightclubs would supplant shoe repair, cleaners, locksmiths, and other small businesses on 24th Street, just as they had on Union Street and other strips in the city.

When the ordinance first took effect, diners in Noe Valley could choose among 29 restaurants and four takeouts. According to city planner Tara Sullivan, just over two decades later, the number of restaurants on 24th Street has dwindled to 22, though there are currently 13 takeout locations.

In the meantime, the number of vacant storefronts has jumped from one in 1987 to 15 today, she said.

Sullivan noted that "the character of Noe Valley has changed" over the past 20 years, as a new generation of younger and wealthier residents has flocked to the neighborhood.

Slow Food Only

Under the proposed changes for 24th Street, a new restaurant would still have to obtain a conditional use permit and undergo public hearings. The city would approve or deny restaurant applications on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, large fast food franchises like In-N-Out Burger, Taco Bell, and KFC would be expressly forbidden.

The safeguards in the legislation, coupled with a competitive marketplace, would prevent Noe Valley from being overrun by restaurants, promised Boe Hayward, a legislative aide to Supervisor Bevan Dufty. The supervisor initiated the push for additional restaurants last October at the request of local merchants.

"Even if you have a rush to fill seven restaurants, we're back to where we were 15 to 20 years ago," Hayward said. And because it's so expensive to open a restaurant in San Francisco, "this is not just something people are going to jump into willy-nilly," he said.

Diamond Street resident Pat Buscovich agreed when he testified at a meeting of the Planning Commission on Jan. 14. "You are not going to see any great sea change on 24th Street as a result.

These are things that will allow 24th Street to grow and progress. I think it's a really good idea."

Some Warn of Congestion

But Eleanore Gerhardt and Jean Amos told the commission that the plan did not sit well with them. In the mid-1980s, both Gerhardt and Amos were actively involved in Friends of Noe Valley, the civic group that fought for the restrictions.

"We have over 50 places where we can buy food, drink, either prepared or to take home," Gerhardt said. "And allowing for more restaurants literally increases the parking problems, and with the daily delivery of materials to the restaurants, it would increase traffic."

She acknowledged that the economic downturn, with its emblematic empty storefronts, had hurt the neighborhood. "As the economy improves, so will 24th Street," she said. "I really do not think you can eat your way out of a recession."

Amos argued that the effort to repeal the legislation was a "movement" pushed by merchants who "would directly benefit from having tourists coming through. Their business obviously would increase, but this is not a good use for a neighborhood," Amos said.

City planner Sullivan contended otherwise. She said that last fall's advent of Whole Foods, the popular gourmet and natural grocery store, had increased vitality on 24th Street, and "certainly some new restaurants have wanted to come in."

Two Permits Unused

The clamor for additional restaurants prompted the city four years ago to grant exemptions for three new full-service establishments. But only one of the three is serving meals today—and the grace period to open closed in March 2009.

"[The other] two have taken out permits, but because of the economy or other

reasons, they have not opened their restaurants and [have] essentially locked out any new restaurants from coming in," Sullivan said.

The one success story is Contigo, a tapas bar at 1320 Castro Street near 24th Street. It opened last March and has drawn rave reviews for its Spanish and Catalan cuisine.

However, a defunct barbershop at 1298 Church Street (at 25th Street), where plans called for a Vietnamese fusion restaurant, remains boarded up. Also, the owners of a permit to open a diner specializing in soups never got their operation running at 4128 24th Street, a former real estate office between Diamond and Castro streets.

"They took the applications and permits and used up the two spots and haven't opened," said Robert Roddick, current president of the Noe Valley Merchants Association. "They've created a real problem."

A community forum on a City Planning decision to lift the limit on new restaurants on 24th Street will be held Thursday, Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m., at St. Philip's Church, 665 Elizabeth Street between Castro and Diamond streets. Participants will include Supervisor Bevan Dufty, the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, the Noe Valley Association, Friends of Noe Valley, the Noe Valley Democratic Club, and Upper Noe Neighbors. Officials from the Planning Department will be available to discuss and answer questions about the code.



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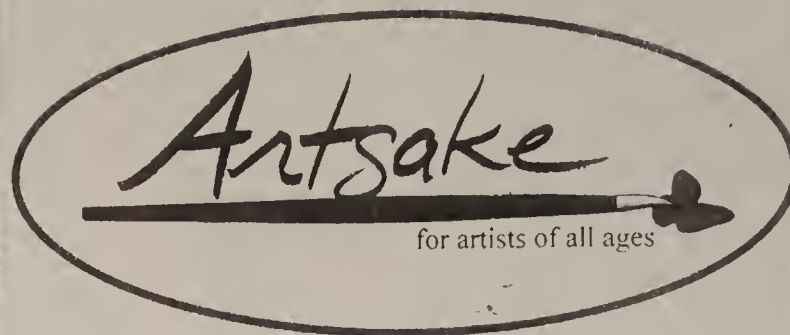
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Merchants Get a Lift Over Holidays

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

noon on a recent weekday, nearly every table was occupied by diners enjoying such varied fare as coffee and pastries, oatmeal, salads, soup, and sandwiches.

"There's a nice lunch rush—lots of moms with strollers," said manager Anna Kelly. And weekends have been busier than expected."

Parents Being Practical

Moms with strollers were also seen in large numbers at Small Frys and Peekaboo-tique, stores catering to the needs of infants and small children near the western end of the 24th Street business corridor.

Owner Carol Yenne said Small Frys posted double-digit sales gains in December compared with a year earlier, though annual sales trailed those of 2008. Practical products—strollers, car-seat covers, diaper bags—sold briskly, as did shoes, pajamas, and jackets. Dresses from Tea, a San Francisco children's clothing label, were also in demand. "We're trying to be optimistic," she said.

Around the corner on Castro, Peekaboo-tique co-owner Michele Furlong said bargain-hunters homed in on toys costing less than \$20. "High price-point items just didn't sell. We've had to rethink our approach," she said.

Practical gifts—hats, coats, shoes, socks, tights, and underwear—sold well,



David Eiland says he's blended 98 percent of the art supplies from the now-closed Artsake into Just for Fun, the gift store he co-owns on 24th Street near Noe. Photo by Pamela Gerard

as did boys' used clothing, Furlong said. "We're having trouble keeping used stuff in stock."

Although last year's sales were little changed from 2008, Furlong said she thinks "we've hit the hardest patch. People are more optimistic. And the baby boom we're experiencing will be good for business."

Find Art in Just for Fun

Back on 24th Street, the holidays were bittersweet for David Eiland and Robert Ramsey, who closed Artsake, their six-

year-old art supply store opposite Whole Foods, in early January.

"It was all about cutting costs," said Eiland, who with Ramsey also owns Just for Fun, a card, stationery, and gift shop on the same block. He said they found room for 98 percent of Artsake's wares at Just for Fun, dropping only a high-end line of acrylic paints that never sold well.

Closing Artsake reduces overhead by \$5,800 a month—money that can be plowed into the business or used to reduce debt. In addition, at Just for Fun art supplies can be displayed in street-level windows, which was not possible in the old location.

Eiland said fourth-quarter merchandise sales were "pleasantly robust," though total revenue was down 1.2 percent due to a drop in custom printing or-

ders from corporate clients.

"January is off to a good start," he continued. "I'm jazzed for 2010."

Duncan's Den and D.O.A.

Two blocks to the west, near Diamond, San Francisco Mystery Bookstore owner Diane Kudisch said that after a slow fall, business picked up from Thanksgiving to Christmas. Sales benefited from the addition of a children's section she calls Duncan's Den after her dog Duncan, a basset-pointer mix. "A girl just bought three Nancy Drew mysteries."

To help keep the momentum going, Kudisch commissioned a TV commercial that pays homage to the 1950 film-noir classic *D.O.A.*, which is set in San Francisco. The ad is running on such cable channels as A&E and TLC.

The store also sports a bright new crimson awning proclaiming it to be "The Oldest Mystery Bookstore in the U.S.A."

Meanwhile, the oldest butcher shop in San Francisco, the 120-year-old Drewes Bros. Meats, keeps rolling along. After a dizzying drop in sales that coincided with the Whole Foods opening, business bounced back in November and December.

"The holidays were fine," said Josh Epple, who owns the venerable Church Street shop. "We had plenty of orders. January is off to a good start, but it will take a month or so to tell if October was an aberration."

Epple said he is considering adding prepared foods to attract hungry commuters embarking from the J-Church streetcar in front of the shop.

"We're going to keep on," he declared. "The community has been very supportive. We made it through the 1906 quake and two world wars. We'll get through this."



Both merchants and residents share an affection for La Boulange. The cozy bakery/cafe has drawn crowds to 24th Street from the first day it opened in November. Photo by Pamela Gerard



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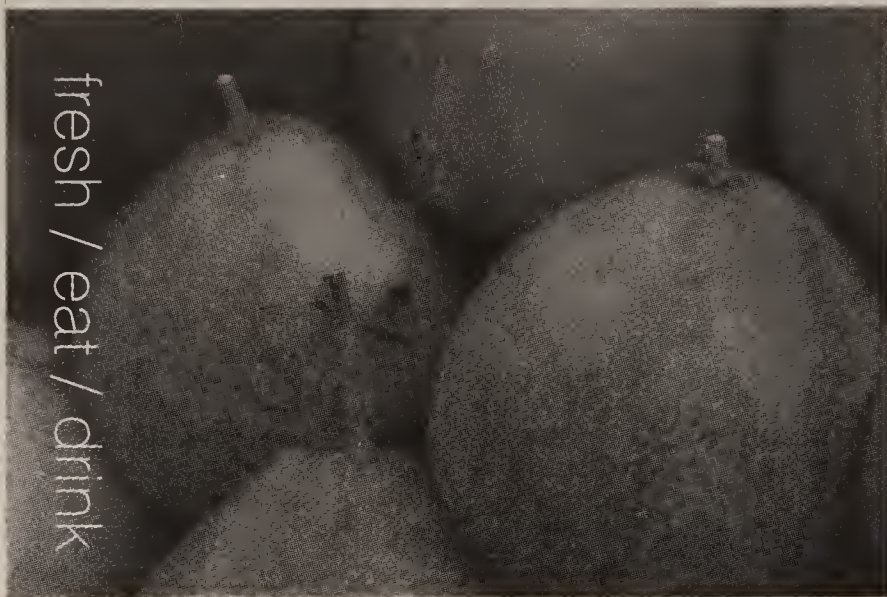


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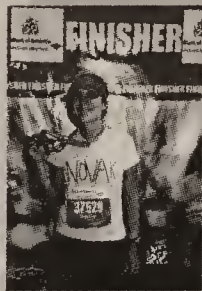
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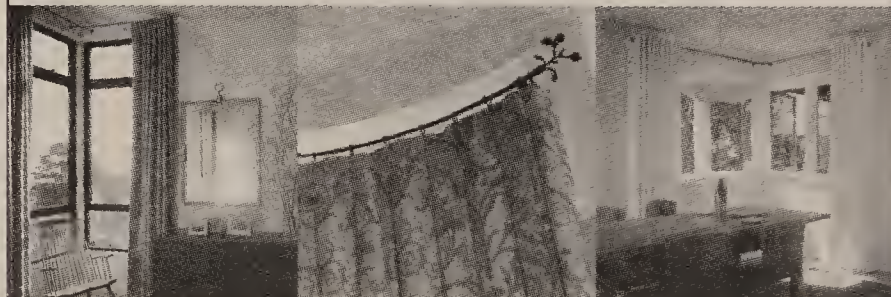
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A Sit-Down with Officer Lorraine Lombardo, SFPD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Special Police, a private group that gets training from the Police Academy and is supervised by the San Francisco Police Department. Lombardo says she appreciates Officer Jane Warner of the Special Patrol. "We communicate well, and it's great having her around."

The *Noe Valley Voice* last profiled Lombardo 18 years ago in the April 1992 issue. "In fact, I think I was interviewed right here," she gestures to the interior of Bernie's. "But back then, it was Spinelli's."

She still has the same schedule—a "4/10, which means I'm on four days with a 10-hour shift from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., and I never know when my days off will be. They're never the same days."

Even though she doesn't live in the neighborhood—"To buy a house, I'm short about a million," she laughs—Lombardo says that the people of Noe Valley are like a family to her. "People are informal and comfortable."

She attends the Noe Valley Merchants Association meetings. "I think we have a mutual respect after all these years. That's not so easy to say for some officers." She also tries to be available for special events like the Harvest Festival and Noel Stroll. "If people specifically ask for me, the station will work to get me here."

Guard That Laptop

Over her career, she's been involved in two shootings, but most of the incidents she encounters in Noe Valley fall into the category of petty theft, burglary, narcotics, robbery, or aggressive panhandling.

Lombardo notes there has been a spate of laptop thefts in cafes in recent months. She looks around at the other Bernie's patrons, and there are at least six sitting with laptops (including this reporter).

"If you're getting up to get your coffee or cream or to go to the bathroom, take your laptop with you. Or ask someone to watch it for you," says Lombardo. "Stolen laptops, cell phones...they're really easy to sell."

Another too common crime in the neighborhood is home invasion. "A basic reminder that we all need to hear is don't forget to lock your doors," says Lombardo. "Particularly back doors to gardens. Make sure you lock your houses completely. A lot of people who have lived 30, 40, 50 years in Noe Valley tell me, 'I feel safe.' But we've had a string of burglaries over the years, and I don't want to see people lose their property while they're asleep."

Lombardo also handles traffic patrol



Lorraine Lombardo's standard mode of transportation, when scouting for cars doing illegal U-turns on Noe Valley's main drag, is her trusty police-issue mountain bike.

Photos by Pamela Gerard

and says she sees many drivers blowing through stop signs or not wearing their seat belts. "My favorite ticket to give out is to drivers who make a U-turn in the middle of the block to get a parking spot on the opposite side of the street. Or drivers that turn left out of the Whole Foods parking lot, when there are two [no-left-turn] signs, one at the exit and another across the street. You know what they say

to me? 'I was in a hurry, I didn't see the sign. I ask them, 'How long have you lived here?'" She shakes her head and laughs.

From Farm to Firearms

As a child who grew up on four different farms—the last one was in Vacaville—Lombardo never dreamed she'd one day have a career in law enforcement.

"I wanted to be a fashion designer! I

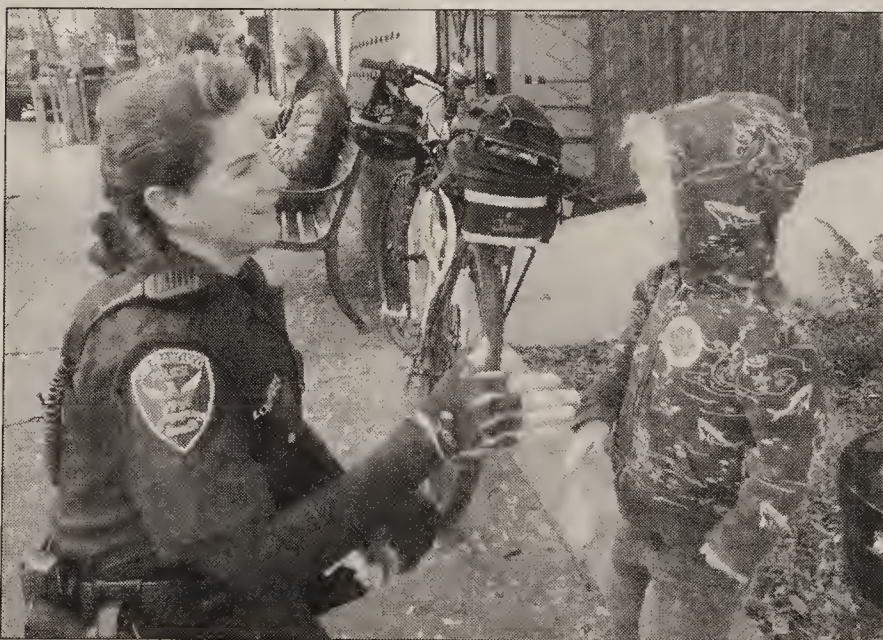
wanted to go to New York. From the first day I came on the beat, you don't know how many times I've been asked, 'What are you doing in this job?' I was 32 when I came in. I had a sales background, and I liked working with people and working outside. And I was tired of not having job security."

Before joining the SFPD, Lombardo owned her own business, the Coffee Connection in Marin, which supplied coffee to offices. "I went from wearing business suits and high heels to carrying a gun."

As for her family at home, they don't worry. From one of the many pockets in her uniform, Lombardo takes out a photo of her two cats, Prince and King. "These are the only men in my life."

She likes dogs too, and is eager to visit the two sheltie puppies in Just for Fun, to frolic with them on the floor. As she heads out the door, she gives a wave to Bernadette Melvin, owner of Bernie's.

"Noe Valley is a great neighborhood," Lombardo says. "It's hard to find much wrong with it."



Officer Lombardo can't walk far on 24th Street without running into one of her friends. When she wants people to come to her, she handcuffs her bike outside Bernie's or Martha's.



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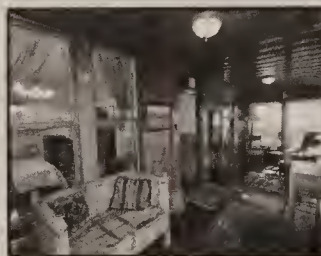
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Baby Lovebird Leaves the Animal Company

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Alvarado School on Douglass Street, spent a month's worth of lunch breaks visiting her little lovebird at the pet store and waiting until she was big enough to move to her new home in mid-January.

Or *his* new home. Zwemer doesn't know Siri's sex, but she's paid the Animal Company the \$30 fee to send a drop of blood from the bird's foot to Davis for DNA testing.

But Siri is more than just a pretty (peach) face. She's also a lot of work.

"It's not something you just put in a cage and it looks pretty in your living room," says Zwemer, who cuts fruit, boils eggs, and shells peas because lovebirds must eat soft, fresh food in addition to seed. Occasionally, she has to clean the entire birdcage in her bathtub.

A smaller cousin to the parrot, lovebirds are smart and can understand language, though they don't speak. They can even be toilet-trained, says Zwemer. Full-grown, they are about five to seven inches long, usually with a green body and a colorful head. Siri's body is mostly bright apple-green.

Some people buy lovebirds in pairs, but those birds may not stand on one foot in their owner's company.

"A pair won't bond to people," Zwemer points out. That's because the two lovebirds are smitten with each other.

For now, Zwemer and her husband are focused on keeping Siri's 50 grams of weight stable or growing. She was a small bird to begin with and birds can lose up to one-third of their weight when they leave their siblings.



"Siri," whose gender at five weeks still remained a mystery, went home to her new family in mid-January. She—or he—may want to attend Alvarado School someday. Photo by Sally Smith

"Birds can die quickly if they lose weight," Zwemer says. If her weight dips, Siri will have to go back to the pet store and live with other birds who will stimulate her and make her eat.

Rick French, owner of the Animal Company, says caring for a lovebird isn't dramatically different from caring for any bird. "They're really nothing unusual," he says.

They are somewhat rare these days, however. Not many people are breeding lovebirds at the moment, so he doesn't get many in the store. When they do come in, they are young—about two weeks old—and need hand-feeding, which is standard for birds in the store. They can live to be 12 to 15 years old, he says.

"It's a good starter bird for someone

who has never had a bird," he says. "They're cute and real personable."

There is no Valentine's Day rush on lovebirds as there are on rabbits at Easter, but French discourages potential customers from buying birds impulsively any time of the year.

"You get a feel for people and whether or not they're interested in getting a pet for a long time," he says. A detailed discussion of bird care can dissuade the impulse buyer.

Not all impulses are bad, though. Zwemer got her first bird when her husband found an escaped parakeet while walking home wondering what he should get his wife for her birthday that day. Mana lived with them for eight years.

After Mana came Lully, Zwemer's adored first lovebird.

"The bird was so bonded to us," she says. "My husband could hold him in his hand and roll him over and pet his stomach. That's really rare for a bird to have that much trust."

Zwemer was devastated when Lully died last year. Her kindergarten class comforted her with letters, and one girl made a bird's nest with eggs.

"They knew, and they were so compassionate," she says.

She has sent an e-card to those students, now in first grade, to thank them and introduce them to Siri.

"For those first-graders, it's learning about loving and losing," she says.

For her current crop of kindergartners, Zwemer has screened a video about Siri and the care of a bird. She even took individual students to meet the bird when she was still at the store.

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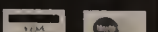
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Circle Bank to Open in Spring... With Cookies

By Tim Innes

With a loud crash, the wall separating two long-vacant storefronts just east of Whole Foods Market came tumbling down late last month, a major step in transforming the space into a Circle Bank office.

The project got the green light Dec. 3 when the Planning Commission voted unanimously to grant Circle's request for a conditional use permit to open its first San Francisco branch, at 3936-38 24th Street. The Novato-based community bank already has four offices in the North Bay.

In addition to knocking down the wall between the former Aveda and Noe Valley Video stores, workers will update electrical and mechanical systems and construct a vault, conference room, computer room, offices, and kitchen. Developer Joe Cassidy said he expects the job to take about 60 days.

Circle hopes to open its doors in late March, followed by a grand opening celebration in mid-April.

The branch will entice customers with a coffee bar and freshly baked cookies, a play area for children, stroller parking, and a place for pets to curl up while their owners conduct business. Plus, it will be open seven days a week.

Kim Kaselionis, the bank's president and CEO, said the branch will have five or six staffers, all new hires and residents of San Francisco. "We will be recruiting from the neighborhood," she said.

Kaselionis said Circle, which specializes in small-business, multifamily-housing, and TIC (tenants-in-common) lending, will sponsor Small Business Administration seminars to help would-be business owners get started and existing businesses grow.

She said Circle aims to be involved in the community and has already partnered with an Alvarado Elementary School PTA project and signed on as a sponsor of the annual neighborhood Easter egg hunt. Once the branch opens, nonprofit and community groups will be able to use the conference room, she added. ■



Mike Gutierrez has a lot of weight on his shoulders these days. He's trying to beat the world record for the largest rubber-band ball, but the current record-holder weighs five tons and has 730,000 rubber bands. Can you help him out, Noe Valley? Photo by Pamela Gerard

Rubber-Band Ball Going for Guinness Record—It Might Be a Stretch

By Jan Goben

Next time you're strolling through Noe Valley, remember to take a few rubber bands with you. There's a big bouncy gal who could sure use them.

Rubberta is not quite six months old, but she has to gain a lot of weight as fast as she can. Her goal? To win a Guinness World Record as the biggest rubber-band ball of all time.

Her creator is Mike Gutierrez, manager at Tuggey's Hardware on 24th Street. "I've always wanted to be in the *Guinness Book of World Records*," says Gutierrez, 28.

Last October, Gutierrez unwrapped some packages at Tuggey's and picked up

the excess rubber bands, looping them into a ball. He kept adding to it, and soon his co-workers were joining in his quest.

Now, Gutierrez says, he carries Rubberta back and forth to work and leaves her during the day on the front counter, where customers give her a pat or add some rubber bands. She's gotten quite big now, and Gutierrez sometimes loops a string of rubber bands together to fit around her girth.

"The guy with the record, it took him 12 or 13 years," Gutierrez says (actually, six). "I've gotten to 50 pounds in just four months. That's 100 pounds in eight months. I want to beat his record in five years. I want to take half his time."

Gutierrez sees Rubberta as eventually being six feet tall (which, of course, means six feet wide as well).

Rubberta has a ways to go—she was 16 inches in diameter on Jan. 30. "Her waistline is 49 inches around, though," says Gutierrez with pride.

But a Web search revealed that in August 2008, Floridian Joel Waul presented the Guinness judges with a rubber-band ball that weighed 9,400 pounds. It took Waul six years and 730,000 rubber bands to make his prize-winner.

However, Gutierrez, a native Noe Valleyan, is not deterred.

He is asking his neighbors to visit Rubberta at Tuggey's (3885 24th Street)

or on Facebook, where her fan base keeps growing.

And don't forget to bring rubber bands.

The Saturday Farmers Market at 24th and Vicksburg has launched a drive to help Gutierrez collect rubber bands for Rubberta. A grand finale and celebration—with rubber-band-related entertainment—will be held on Saturday, March 13 (the day before daylight savings time), starting at noon. ■

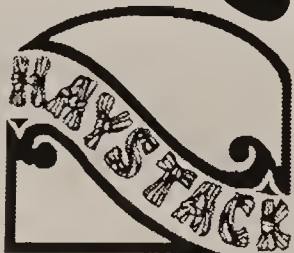


Pug Bruce Wayne has been a key player in the rubber-band campaign since its start at Tuggey's Hardware last October.

Photo courtesy Mike Gutierrez

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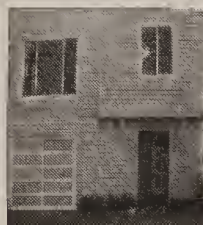
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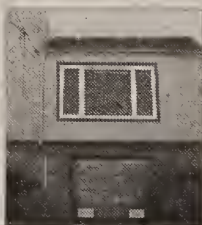
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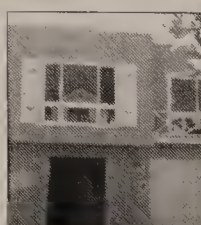
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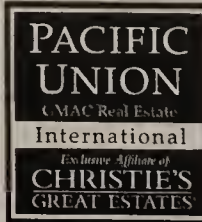
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The Fine Art Of Fine Property

The Cost of Living in Noe

Decade of Ups and Downs

By Corrie M. Anders

The housing market in Noe Valley ended a roller-coaster decade with a mixture of rising sales and falling home values.

In November and December 2009, new residents purchased 19 single-family detached homes, according to sales data supplied to the *Voice* by Zephyr Real Estate. During the same two months in 2008, 13 homes were sold.

The 19 transactions pushed total sales to 117 for all of 2009—five more than the 112 sales posted in 2008.

However, home prices were down for the year. Data showed that the average sales price of a home in Noe Valley last year was \$1,307,598—a 13.8 percent drop from 2008's average of \$1,517,451.

Ten years ago, in November/December

2000, there were 18 single-family homes purchased in the neighborhood, at an average price of \$883,055 (see February 2001 *Voice*).

In the white-hot market of 2005, buyers snapped up 167 homes at an average price of \$1,277,075. Average values rose the next year to \$1,303,143 on 132 sales, and to \$1,491,374 on 108 sales in 2007.

The banking, mortgage, and stock market crisis in the fall of 2008 precipitated a nationwide real estate slump, which by early last year had Noe Valley firmly in its grip.

Randall Kostick, Zephyr's general manager, says he expects a return to a more conventional marketplace as the new decade gets under way. One sign of that will be homeowners listing their homes in mid-March to get an early start on spring sales.

"I've got my fingers crossed on that one," Kostick said.

If there is a silver lining in the November-December statistics, it is that buyers have gained some sway in what is considered one of the priciest neighborhoods in San Francisco.

The least expensive Noe Valley house cost about three-quarters of a million dollars in December and \$700,000 in November. That's a lot of money, but less

Noe Valley Home Sales*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
Single-family homes						
Dec. 2009	7	\$ 756,217	\$1,710,000	\$1,300,888	76	97%
Nov. 2009	12	\$ 700,000	\$2,925,000	\$1,262,917	46	100%
Dec. 2008	6	\$ 885,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,219,833	75	99%
Nov. 2008	7	\$1,000,000	\$5,818,000	\$1,921,143	32	95%
Condominium						
Dec. 2009	3	\$ 755,000	\$ 796,500	\$ 770,500	147	98%
Nov. 2009	4	\$ 675,000	\$ 903,000	\$ 807,000	69	99%
Dec. 2008	4	\$ 650,000	\$1,198,000	\$ 869,500	76	98%
Nov. 2008	2	\$ 324,000	\$ 895,000	\$ 609,500	91	94%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
Dec. 2009	2	\$1,375,000	\$1,425,000	\$1,400,000	47	98%
Nov. 2009	2	\$ 921,500	\$1,056,500	\$ 989,000	117	99%
Dec. 2008	0	—	—	—	—	—
Nov. 2008	3	\$1,050,000	\$1,360,000	\$1,195,000	64	100%
5+-unit buildings						
Dec. 2009	0	—	—	—	—	—
Nov. 2009	0	—	—	—	—	—
Dec. 2008	1	\$1,960,000	\$1,960,000	\$1,960,000	197	96%
Nov. 2008	0	—	—	—	—	—

* Sales include all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. Noe Valley in this survey is defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The *Voice* thanks Zephyr Real Estate (www.zephyrsf.com) for supplying the sales data.

NY 2/10

A Snapshot of Noe Valley Rents**

Unit	No. in Sample	Range Jan. 2010	Average Jan. 2010	Average Nov. 2009	Average Jan. 2009
5studio	11	\$ 995 – \$1,450	\$1,278 / mo.	\$1,307 / mo.	\$1,429 / mo.
1-bdrm	32	\$1,295 – \$2,750	\$1,810 / mo.	\$1,775 / mo.	\$1,880 / mo.
2-bdrm	40	\$1,650 – \$4,350	\$2,709 / mo.	\$2,625 / mo.	\$2,972 / mo.
3-bdrm	23	\$2,020 – \$7,000	\$4,210 / mo.	\$3,884 / mo.	\$4,086 / mo.
4+-bdrm	11	\$4,150 – \$8,750	\$5,805 / mo.	\$6,367 / mo.	\$6,759 / mo.

** Survey based on a sample of 117 Noe Valley listings appearing on Craigslist.org from Dec. 31, 2009, to Jan. 12, 2010.

NY 2/10

than the cheapest houses sold in the same two months a year earlier—\$885,000 and \$1 million.

The reason, Kostick said, was a "combination of lower-priced homes on the market" and a few sellers "taking a significant reduction in their prices to get them sold at a difficult time."

Still, Noe Valley is not a hangout for the stone soup crowd.

Last November, two homes sold for more than \$2 million, including a six-bedroom, 4.5-bath house in the 4200 block of 25th Street between Castro and Diamond streets. The 4,395-square-foot property sold at the asking price of \$2,925,000.

A four-bedroom, three-bath house in the 1300 block of Sanchez Street was the most expensive sold in December. The 2,200-square-foot home, located between Cesar Chavez and 27th streets, sold for \$85,000 less than the \$1,795,000 list price.

Condominium sales were stable in November and December of 2009. Seven condos changed hands, compared with

six during the same months in 2008.

Buyers paid \$903,000 in November for a two-bedroom, two-bath unit in the 1000 block of Sanchez Street between 23rd and Elizabeth streets. The 1,500-square-foot condo sold for 5 percent more than the asking price.

In December, the owners of a Diamond Street condo waited nearly nine months—258 days—to close escrow on a 1,400-square-foot unit. Buyers paid \$796,500—slightly below the \$800,000 asking price—for the three-bedroom, 2.5-bath property located between 21st and 22nd streets.



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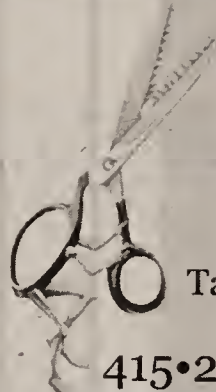
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POLICE BEAT

REPORT FROM MISSION STATION

The Voice thanks Mission Police Officers Miguel Granados and Lorraine Lombardo for providing this tally of incidents occurring in the part of Noe Valley within the Mission Police District. The log includes some but not all incidents occurring Nov. 3, 2009, to Jan. 3, 2010, in the area bordered by Grand View, 21st, Guerrero, and Cesar Chavez streets. To contact Officers Granados or Lombardo, call Mission Station at 558-5400. Members of the San Francisco Patrol Special Police also patrol 24th Street. To reach the Special Patrol, call 559-9955.

Nov. 3, 9 a.m., 3900 block of 23rd, Burglary: Victim left property in a room and upon return found personal items missing.

Nov. 14, 2 p.m., 23rd & Fair Oaks, Stolen Vehicle

Nov. 16, 2009, 8:30 p.m., 100 block of Fair Oaks, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle's window smashed and personal items missing.

Nov. 18, 12 a.m., Jersey & Castro, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle's window smashed and personal items missing.

Nov. 18, 4 a.m., 26th & Castro, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle's window smashed and personal items missing.

Nov. 19, 12:01 a.m., 4400 block of 24th, Burglary, Vehicle Tampering: Victim parked and locked their vehicle in the building's parking lot. Upon return, they discovered the building had been broken into and their vehicle's window was smashed, though nothing was stolen.

Nov. 19, 10 a.m., 1200 block of Noe, Vehicle Tampering: Victim parked and locked vehicle. Upon return, they discovered the vehicle had been ransacked, but no personal items were missing.

Nov. 20, 8:30 a.m., 600 block of Alvarado, Computer Tampering: Victim's computer made thousands of calls throughout the country without authorization. No forced entry found and no suspects observed.

Nov. 22, 1 p.m., Elizabeth & Noe, Stolen Vehicle

Nov. 22, 5 p.m., Noe & Clipper, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked vehicle. Upon return, they found the

Suspect Sought in Disturbing Incident on 24th Street

A man uttering coarse sexual language threatened and frightened several female merchants in January during a middle-of-the-day rant along 24th Street. The tirade took place Jan. 25 near businesses at the intersection of 24th and Church streets, according to Mission District Police Captain Greg Corrales.

A serious incident occurred about 1:15 p.m., when the man tried to push his way past the door of a martial arts studio. "Hey baby, how's it going?" the man asked the lone employee before demanding sex. The woman was able to keep the man from entering and lock the studio door. The terrified employee told police she feared the man was attempting to rape her.

About the same time, a woman working at a nearby bar said a man made several vulgar comments to her before using the bar's bathroom and leaving. She said she felt "uncomfortable" and that his behavior was "very strange."

Corrales said numerous police units searched the area but could not locate the suspect. An exterior surveillance camera at a bank in the vicinity may have taken photographs of the man. "We're actively looking for this guy," Corrales said. "He seemed to me to be deranged."

The suspect was described as a black male, 23 to 25 years old, six feet tall and 210 pounds, with tiny teeth and large gums. He was wearing black pants, a black hoodie, a single black glove, and black-rimmed sunglasses that were thick and heavily taped.

Following the attacks, members of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association activated the group's phone tree to warn local businesses about the suspect.

Anyone with information regarding the incident should call Mission Police at 558-5400.

—Corrie M. Anders

vehicle's window smashed and personal items missing.

Nov. 24, 8:30 a.m., 1300 block of Sanchez, Stolen Vehicle

Nov. 24, 5 p.m., unit block of Hoffman, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and left their vehicle unlocked. Upon return they found the vehicle had been ransacked and personal items taken.

Nov. 30, 5 p.m., 100 block of Fair Oaks, Burglary: Victim placed personal belongings in an unlocked common area and upon return found they had been stolen.

Nov. 30, 5:30 p.m., 1300 block of Castro, Shoplifting: Victim noticed a female suspect enter the store and then leave abruptly. Victim later noticed merchandise had been stolen.

Nov. 30, 9 p.m., 500 block of Shotwell, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked their vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle door had been broken and personal items taken.

Dec. 4, 11:55 p.m., 25th & Church, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked their vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle had been broken into and personal items were taken.

Dec. 8, 1 a.m., 25th & Fair Oaks, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked their vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle had been broken into and personal items taken.

Dec. 10, 8 p.m., 1100 block of Dolores, Graffiti: Victim's home was tagged with graffiti.

Dec. 8, 1 a.m., 25th & Fair Oaks, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked their vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle had been broken into and personal items taken.

Dec. 15, 4:30 p.m., 1200 block of Diamond, Vehicle Stolen

Dec. 15, 11 p.m., 3800 block of 25th, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked their vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle had been broken into and personal items taken.

Dec. 17, 4:30 p.m., 800 block of Elizabeth, Battery: Officers charged a suspect from an earlier battery, still in custody for sexual assault from earlier in the day. He was booked on several felony charges.

Dec. 17, 11:57 p.m., 1200 block of Castro, Battery: Officers responded to a battery in progress. Officers arrested a suspect and booked him accordingly. Victim sustained minor injuries.

Dec. 18, 1 p.m., 26th & Sanchez, Traffic Accident, Hit & Run: Officers charged a suspect in custody from an earlier battery and sexual assault. He was booked on several felony charges.

Dec. 21, 9:30 p.m., 600 block of Alvarado, Vandalism: Victim found their front-door lock damaged from an apparent burglary attempt. No suspects were observed.

Dec. 23, 1:30 p.m., 4100 block of 24th, Shoplifting: Victim found a large amount merchandise stolen from the business. No suspects were observed.

Dec. 21, 6:30 a.m., 1100 block of Dia-

mond, Theft from Locked Vehicle: Victim parked and locked their vehicle. Upon return, they found the vehicle had been broken into and personal items taken.

Jan. 2, 2010, 4 p.m., 23rd & Church, Recovered Stolen Vehicle

Jan. 3, 11 a.m., 24th & Chaitanooga, Battery: Victim's arm was grabbed by an unknown male for no apparent reason. Suspect fled prior to officers' arrival. Victim sustained minor injury.

REPORT FROM INGLESIDE STATION

The crime log for Upper Noe Valley—an area roughly bounded by Cesar Chavez, Guerrero, 30th, and Diamond streets—has been culled from newsletters produced by Capt. David Lazar, commander of Ingleside Police Station. The incidents are those reported from Nov. 19, 2009, to Jan. 15, 2010. Please note that this log may not include all incidents occurring or reported during the period.

Nov. 19, 11:50 a.m., 100 block of 28th, Theft/Suspicious: Officer Coles responded to a call regarding a theft of United Parcel Service deliveries. The victim said over the last year and a half several of his UPS deliveries had been stolen and a suspect had been seen looking up stairwells of multiple properties. The victim believes the suspect may be looking for property to steal that has been left on doorsteps.

Nov. 20, 7 a.m., 1500 block of Church, Theft from Building: Officers Lim and Fuentes were sent to investigate a theft. The victim told the officers he locked his bikes on a wall rack. When the victim returned, he discovered the bikes were missing.

Nov. 22, 11 a.m., Valley at Church, Stolen Vehicle

Nov. 20, 9 a.m., Church at 27th, Robbery with a Gun: Officer Morgante was sent to investigate a robbery case. The victim told officers she boarded Muni and that she had her iPhone in her hand. The suspect stood in front of her and pulled out a revolver. The suspect took her phone and then fled in an unknown direction.

Nov. 23, 7 p.m., 200 block of Valley, Theft from Auto: The victim parked his car and left. When he returned, he discovered that someone had broken his window and removed a jacket.

Nov. 26, 10:05 p.m., 30th & Dolores, Attempted Robbery: Officer Sugitan and Officer Chou responded to a report of a fight with weapons. When they arrived, they met with a man who had suffered cut wounds. The victim said he and a friend were walking down the street when they were approached by four men who asked for their money. The victims feared for their safety so they tried to run from the suspects, who then caught up to them. The suspects

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



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**From Thailand
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Matt and Brooke Peterson traveled to Bangkok on their honeymoon in November. Here they renew their allegiance to hometown Noe Valley near the reclining Buddha at Wat Pho.



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CALENDAR

Feb. 1: Cartoonist/author TRINA ROB-BINS discusses her book *Forbidden City: The Golden Age of Chinese Nightclubs* at the Odd Mondays series at the Noe Valley Ministry. 7:30 pm; no-host dinner Haystack Pizza, 6 pm (RSVP jlsender@webtv.net). 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

Feb. 1, 8, 15 & 22: You can be funny on Mondays at Bliss Bar at COMEDY Open Mic Night, starting 8 pm. 4026 24th. 826-6200; www.blissbarsf.com.

Feb. 1-22: Chris Sequeira offers a free Monday introductory QIGONG/TAI CHI session at the Glen Park baseball field, Elk & Chenery, at 10:30 am, and at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez, at 6 pm. livingtaichiprinciples.blogspot.com; 773-8185.

Feb. 1-26: Noe Valley SENIOR CENTER serves hot lunches for people over 60, weekdays at 12:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. Call to reserve a spot, 648-1030.

Feb. 1-27: OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS meets Mon.-Sat., 7 am. 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

Feb. 2: STEPHEN ELLIOTT discusses his new book, *The Adderall Diaries*, at 826 Valencia. 7-9 pm. 642-5905, ext. 210; www.826valencia.org.

Feb. 2: *Stepping Into the Stream*, a film about women and FLY FISHING by Noe Valley resident Barbara Klutinis, will be shown at the Delancey Street Screening Room. 7 pm. 600 Embarcadero. 830-0450; klubarb@gmail.com.

Feb. 2, 9, 16 & 23: Sing along with Patrick Sosa at Phoenix Books' Tuesday-morning STORY HOUR, for babies to age 4. 10 am. 3957 24th. 821-3477.

Feb. 2, 9, 16 & 23: The Noe Valley Library sponsors TODDLER TALES, starting at 10:15 am. Family Time follows at 11 am. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.sfpl.org.

Feb. 2, 9, 16 & 23: Kadampa Buddhist Temple holds MEDITATION on Tuesdays. 7-8:45 pm. 3324 17th. 503-1187.

Feb. 2-28: City Guide Dan Sullivan leads WALKING TOURS of the Castro on Tuesdays and Sundays. Meet at 11 am at Harvey Milk Plaza (Castro & Market) under the rainbow flag. 557-4266; www.sfcityguides.org.

Feb. 3-20: JOSE ALVAREZ exhibits new work in "Surfaces of Constant Time" at Ratio3 Gallery. Wed.-Sat., 11 am-6 pm. 1447 Stevenson. 821-3371; www.ratio3.org.

Feb. 3-20: Four artists exhibit PORTRAITS in "ID Redux" at Cain Schulte Gallery. Wed.-Fri., noon-5 pm. 714 Guerrero/19th. 543-1550.

Feb. 3, 10, 17 & 24: Eureka Valley Library's Wednesday BABY RHYME TIME, for 0-18 months, begins at 1:30 pm; a family story time for ages 2 to 5 starts at 3:30 pm. 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616.

Feb. 4: Comments are due on the GLEN PARK Community Plan involving Glen Park BART. View the report at <http://mea.sfplanning.org>. 575-9032.

Feb. 4: St. James School hosts an OPEN HOUSE for parents of potential students in K-8th. 5-7 pm. 321 Fair Oaks. 647-8972; www.saintjamessf.org.

Feb. 4-18: The 12th annual San Francisco INDIEFEST at the Roxie includes documentaries, shorts, and feature films. 3117 16th. 863-1087; www.sfindie.com.

Feb. 4, 11 & 25: Youngsters ages 18 to 36 months are invited to sing and play in English and Spanish at TODDLER TIME at Mission Library. 10:10-11 am. 300 Bartlett. 355-2800.

Feb. 4, 11, 18 & 25: Pal Mel teaches PAL TIME, a class for kids 18 months to 3 years. 8:30 am. MoBu Dance Studio, 1605 Church. 550-PALS; www.pal-ersize.com.

Feb. 4, 11, 18 & 25: A Thursday STROLLER WALK through the neighborhood starts at Holey Bagel at 11 am. 3872 24th. www.noestrolls.com.

Feb. 5: The opening reception for the City Arts GROUP SHOW "The Elements: Earth, Wind, Fire & Water" goes from 7 to 10 pm. 828 Valencia. 970-9900; www.cityartgallery.org.

Feb. 5-26: CLARE tells tales for kids at Cover to Cover's story hour. Fridays, 10:30 am. 1307 Castro. 282-8080.

Feb. 5-26: Yell "BINGO!" at St. Paul's Friday nights at 7 pm (doors open at 5 pm). Parish Hall, 221 Valley. 648-7538

Feb. 6: Bring old cards, calendars, and magazines to the Sunnyside Conservatory's free VALENTINE CARD PARTY. 11 am-2 pm. 236 Monterey. 334-3601; www.sunnysideconservatory.org.

Feb. 6: The Museum of Craft and Folk Art presents a slide show and crafts program for ages 6 and older, "Textiles of WEST AFRICA," at the Eureka Valley Library. 1:30-2:30 pm. 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616.

Feb. 6: The Men of St. Paul's Church host a SUPER BOWL PARTY with refreshments. 2-7 pm. Parish Hall, Church & Valley. 309-9428; www.stpaulsf.org.

Feb. 6: Tori Ritchie offers slow-cooked RECIPES in *Braises and Stews*. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 6: The ROVA Saxophone Quartet performs at the Noe Valley Music Series. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noeval-leymusicseries.com.

Feb. 6 & 7: ODC DANCE JAM teen company performs new works by local choreographers. Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 5 pm. ODC Dance Commons, 351 Shotwell. 863-6606; www.odcdance.org.

Feb. 6, 13, 20 & 27: Andrea's BELLY-DANCE BOOTCAMP combines dance and strengthening exercises. 12:30-1:30 pm. MoBu Dance Studio, 1605 Church. www.andreabellydance.com.

Feb. 6, 13, 20 & 27: Come hear the Swinging Guitars of Tom Huber, Mississippi Mike, and "Squeezebox Goddess" Renée de la Prade (Feb. 6); Jude and Mission Hill (Feb. 13); Diamond Moodie and Dennis Campagna (Feb. 20); and Andy Gillis & Nathan Borofka, the She's, and the Psychotherapists (Feb. 27) at the Noe Valley FARMERS' MARKET, held Saturdays, 8 am-1 pm. 24th & Vicksburg. 248-1332; www.noevalley-farmersmarket.com.

Feb. 6 & March 6: Precita Eyes Mural Arts hosts a MURAL WALK the first Saturday of the month. Meet at 11 am at the 16th Street BART plaza near the Wells Fargo Bank sign. 285-2287; www.precitaeyes.org.

Feb. 6-March 10: Artist Josh Ellingson introduces his new book, *All the Best*, at MISSION COMICS & Art Reception Feb. 6, 7 pm; Tues.-Sun., noon-8 pm. 3520 20th, Suite B. www.missioncomicsandart.com

Feb. 7: Nader Shabahangi discusses his *Conversations with Ed: Waiting for Forgetfulness: Why We Are So Afraid of ALZHEIMER'S Disease*. 2-4 pm. Bird & Beckett Books, 653 Chenery. 586-3733; www.bird-beckett.com.

Feb. 7: Lisa Schwartz introduces her MEMOIR, *Over the Rainbeau: Living the Dream of Sustainable Farming*. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 7: Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC features the Del Sol String Quartet performing works by Haydn, Szymanski, and Glass at the Noe Valley Ministry. 4 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 648-5236; www.nvcm.org.

Feb. 7, 14 & 21: Learn about MISSION DOLORES at a City Guides walk on Sundays, 11 am. Meet at the gold fire hydrant at 20th and Church. 557-4266; www.sfcityguides.org.

Feb. 7 & 21: SF City Guides leads free WALKING TOURS of Noe Valley on first and third Sundays. 1-3 pm. Meet at 451 Jersey. 557-4266; www.sfcityguides.org.

Feb. 7 & March 7: Rocket DOG RESCUE has dogs who need homes. Noon-4 pm. Zephyr Real Estate, 4040 24th. 642-4786.

Feb. 8: View the SPRING PROGRAM schedule for Upper Noe Rec Center online. Registration starts March 6, 10 am. Park hours: Mon.-Fri., 9 am-10 pm; Sat. & Sun., 9 am-5 pm. Upper Noe Rec Center, 295 Day at Sanchez. 970-8061; sfreconline.org.

Feb. 8: The Monthly RUMPUS features authors Tony Dushane, Robin Ekiss, Ethan Watters, Kevin Sampson, and Daniel Handler, DJ Real and music by the Yellow Dress, a hoopdance performance by Richard Porter, and food from the Girl From Empanada. 7 pm. The Makeout Room, 3229 22nd. 647-2888.

Feb. 9, 16 & 23: TODDLER TALES at the Eureka Valley Library features books, rhymes, music, and movement for ages 18 to 36 months. 10:30 am. 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616.

Feb. 11: Openhouse Outreach invites LGBT SENIORS to second-Thursday meetings at 30th Street Senior Center. 10 am. 225 30th. 296-8995.

Feb. 11: Cooks Boulevard hosts a TASTING of Frog Hollow Farm products, including scones, granola, chutney, and jams. 3-5 pm. 1309 Castro. 647-2665; www.cooksboulevard.com.

Feb. 11: 18 Reasons hosts a "Sweet VALENTINE 18th Hour" cookie-decorating get-together for singles. 7-9 pm. 593 Guerrero. info@18reasons.org.

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FEBRUARY 2010

Feb. 12: Celebrate BLACK HISTORY MONTH at "Soul Food for Thought," featuring music, food, and speakers to benefit the International Fund for Africa. 5:30 pm reception, 8 pm show. Herbst Theater, 401 Van Ness. 392-4400; www.ifundafrika.org.

Feb. 12: Literary DEATH MATCH features readers Joshua Mohr, Samantha Schoech, Michelle Tea, and Dylan Schaffer, from 6:30 to 9 pm; Free Funk Friday follows at 10 pm. Elbo Room, 647 Valencia. 552-7788; www.elbo.com.

Feb. 12: TANGO No. 9 and guest dancers perform at the Noe Valley Music Series. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

Feb. 12, 19, 26 & March 5: Video Wave's Family MOVIE NIGHT features *The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh* (Feb. 12), *Chicken Run* (Feb. 19), *Pinocchio* (Feb. 26), and *Anastasia* (March 5). 6 pm. Fima Photography, 1414 Castro. 641-1010 or 550-7577.

Feb. 13: LADYBUG GARDENERS invite you to help weed and tend the park at Upper Noe Rec Center on the second Saturday of the month. 9 am-noon. Day & Sanchez. 695-5011; jrlion@aol.com.

Feb. 13: Local doulas and MIDWIVES gather on second Saturdays at Natural Resources. 2-4 pm. 1367 Valencia. 550-2611; www.naturalresources-sf.com.

Feb. 13: Christie Matheson discusses *SALTY SWEETS* at Omnivore Books. 3-4 pm. 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 13: WRITERS With Drinks hosts readings by Vikram Chandra, Cherie Priest, James Rollins, Andrew Porter, and Derek Powazek, to benefit the Center for Sex and Culture. 7:30 pm. Make-Out Room, 3225 22nd. www.writerswithdrinks.com.

Feb. 13: The SF BLUEGRASS & Old-Time Festival features Fretnot, the Wranglers, and Family Lines. 7:30 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

Feb. 13: Café du Nord hosts a "Port-land invasion" (bands from Oregon and Maine) as part of the SF BLUEGRASS and Old-Time Festival. 8 pm. 2170 Market. 861-5016; www.sfbluegrass.org.

Feb. 14: Tour guide Kathy Amendola discusses her "Cruisin' the Castro" walk at the monthly PFLAG meeting. 2-4 pm. St. Francis Lutheran Church, 152 Church. 921-8850; www.pflagssf.org.

Feb. 15: Sara Segal, Noe Valley resident and member of the 2002 Civil Grand Jury, discusses her experiences at ODD MONDAYS. 7:30 pm; no-host dinner Haystack Pizza, 6 pm (RSVP jlsender@webtv.net). 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

Feb. 17: City Assessor Phil Ting and SF Budget Department Director Leo Levenson discuss the 2010 BUDGET at the Noe Valley Democratic Club Meeting. 7:30 pm. St. Philip's Church, 725 Diamond. molly@firsf.com.

Feb. 17: The Noe Valley BOOK DISCUSSION Group meets on third Wednesdays, from 7 to 8:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; www.sfpl.org.

Feb. 18: J-CHURCH track replacement and noise issues are on the agenda at the Upper Noe Neighbors monthly meeting. 7:30 pm. Noe Valley Rec Center. Day & Sanchez. 285-0473; vickimrosen@gmail.com.

Feb. 18: The EUREKA VALLEY Promotion Association meets the third Thursday of the month. 7:30 pm. Castro Meeting Room, 501 Castro. 437-9414; www.evpa.org.

Feb. 18-April 4: Creativity Explored exhibits a group show to celebrate CHINESE NEW YEAR, "Tiger Leaping Gold Mountain." Opening Feb. 18, 7-9 pm. Mon.-Wed. & Fri., 10 am-3 pm.; Thurs., 10 am-7 pm; Sat., 1-6 pm. 3245 16th. 863-2108; www.creativityexplored.org.

Feb. 19: The SF BLUEGRASS and Old-Time Festival features the bands Jackstraw and the Crooked Jades. 7:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 454-5238; www.noevalleymusicseries.com.

Feb. 19-March 13: NINA WISE performs *What Just Happened?*, a solo improvisation based on personal and political events of the last 24 hours. Fri. & Sat., 8 pm. The Marsh, 1062 Valencia. 271-3256; www.themarsh.org.

Feb. 20: FINANCIAL ADVISER Catherine Pinkas discusses "Taking Control: Planning for the Future" at the Older Women's League (OWL). 10 am-noon. Flood Building, 870 N. Market, Room 975. Preregistration required: 989-4422; www.owlsf.com.

Feb. 20: Tim Holt performs a tribute, "WOODY GUTHRIE and the Great American Folksong." 3-4:30 pm. Glen Park Library, 2825 Diamond. 355-2858.

Feb. 20: Omnivore Books hosts a WINE TASTING with author Kermit Lynch. 5-6 pm. 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 21: People born in the year of the Year of the Tiger (1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998 & 2010) get free admission to the LUNAR NEW YEAR celebration at the SF Zoo. 10 am-3 pm. 753-7080.

Feb. 21: Sonia Ricket and guests host a TANGO Master Class at Community Music Center. 3-5 pm. 544 Capp. 647-6015; www.sfcmc.org.

Feb. 21: JAZZ VESPER at the Noe Valley Ministry features "Music of Forgiveness." 5-6 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317; www.noevalleyministry.org.

Feb. 21: Four local bakers contribute to a CUPCAKE-TASTING at Cooks Boulevard. 6:30-7:15 pm. 1309 Castro. 647-2665; www.cooksboulevard.com.

Feb. 22: Atlas Café hosts a discussion about restoring COYOTE VALLEY. 7-9 pm. 3049 20th. 648-1047; www.sciencecafesf.com.

Feb. 23: Park Ranger Rick Penn discusses "The BUFFALO SOLDIERS at the Presidio" at the monthly San Francisco History Association meeting. 8 pm. St. Philip's Church, 725 Diamond. 750-9986; www.sanfranciscohistory.org.

Feb. 24: Shop at Noe Valley's WHOLE FOODS Market, which is donating 5 percent of today's sales to the community garden at James Lick Middle School. 8 am-10 pm. 3950 24th.

Feb. 24: The Noe Valley MERCHANTS and Professionals Association meets the last Wednesday of the month. 9 am. Bank of America, 4098 24th. Robert T. Roddick, 641-8687.

Feb. 25: Paxton Gate offers a class in INSECT-mounting. 4-7 pm. 824 Valencia. 824-1872; www.PaxtonGate.com.

Feb. 25: Bring food-related books to a COOKBOOK SWAP at 18 Reasons, co-sponsored by Omnivore Books. 7-9 pm. 593 Guerrero. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com or info@18reasons.org.

Feb. 25: Supervisor Bevan Dufty and five neighborhood groups host a COMMUNITY FORUM on a proposal to end limits on new 24th Street restaurants. Police Capt. Greg Corrales of Mission Station provides a safety update. 7:30 pm. St. Philip's Church, 665 Elizabeth. 554-6987; boe.hayward@sfgov.org.

Feb. 26: More than 80 local high schoolers compete in the Unified District POETRY SLAM Championship at the Main Library. 7-9:30 pm. 100 Larkin. 557-4400; www.sfpl.org.

Feb. 27: Michael Kalanty gives advice on *How to BAKE BREAD*. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 27-March 6: This year's Middle School SCIENCE FAIR features over 200 projects culled from 4,000 entrants. Tues.-Sat., 10 am-5 pm. Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way. 554-9600.

Feb. 28: CHOCOLATIER Michael Recchiuti and cookbook author Fran Gage discuss *Chocolate Obsession*. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; www.omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 28: Pianist Larry Vuckovich and drummer EDDIE MARSHALL play bebop and jazz at the Bliss Bar Sunday afternoon jazz series "The Art of the Duo." 4:30-7:30 pm. 4026 24th. 826-6200; www.blissbarsf.com.

March 1: Women refugee expert Hazel Reitz talks about her book, *Winds of Darfur*, at ODD MONDAYS at the Noe Valley Ministry. 7:30 pm; no-host dinner Haystack Pizza, 6 pm (RSVP jlsender@webtv.net). 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

March 6: Registration begins for classes this spring at UPPER NOE Rec Center and other parks in the city. 10 am. Upper Noe Park, 295 Day at Sanchez. 970-8061; sfreconline.org.

March 6: The Noe Valley Library and the Garden for the Environment host a discussion of ROOFTOP GARDENING. 2-3 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707.

March 6: Karen Ande discusses her book, *Face to Face: Children of the AIDS CRISIS in Africa*. 3-4 pm. Glen Park Library, 2825 Diamond. 355-2858.

MARCHING ORDERS

The next *Noe Valley Voice* will be the March 2010 issue, appearing on the streets of Noe Valley the first week of March. Email calendar items by **Feb. 15** to calendar@noevalleyvoice.com or write Calendar, *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., S.F., CA 94114. Note: Events in Noe Valley and surrounding neighborhoods receive priority. Thank you.

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SAT
FEB
13

CHRISTIE MATHESON • 3-4 P.M. • FREE
Salty Sweets. Join us for delectable desserts and tempting treats with a sublime kiss of salt.

SAT
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20

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27

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28

MICHAEL RECCHIUTI & FRAN GAGE • 3-4 P.M. • FREE • *Chocolate Obsession*. Join chocolatier Michael Recchiuti and cookbook author Fran Gage as we discuss the ins and outs of chocolate. Samples will be provided by the authors!

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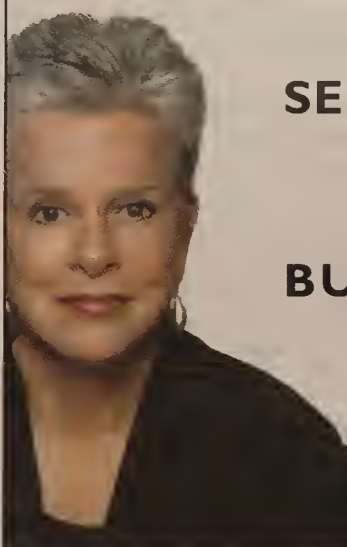
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Kevin Danaher finds it easy to smile under the sunny skies of Havana, Cuba while reading the *Noe Valley Voice* he brought along. Behind him, is the famed José Martí monument in Revolution Square. Danaher is executive director of the Global Citizen Center, and can be reached at www.globalcitizencenter.org.

A Love of Reading While On The Road

Our readers report that spending time with this journal improves their disposition which in turn makes them more able to enjoy travel outside our favored neighborhood. To read is to love. So don't forget to take a copy of the *Noe Valley Voice* with you when you leave. And when you return, kindly mail a photo print to the *Noe Valley Voice*, Attn: Readers, PO Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146, or you're also welcome to email editor@noevalleyvoice.com with your digital file. Thank you!

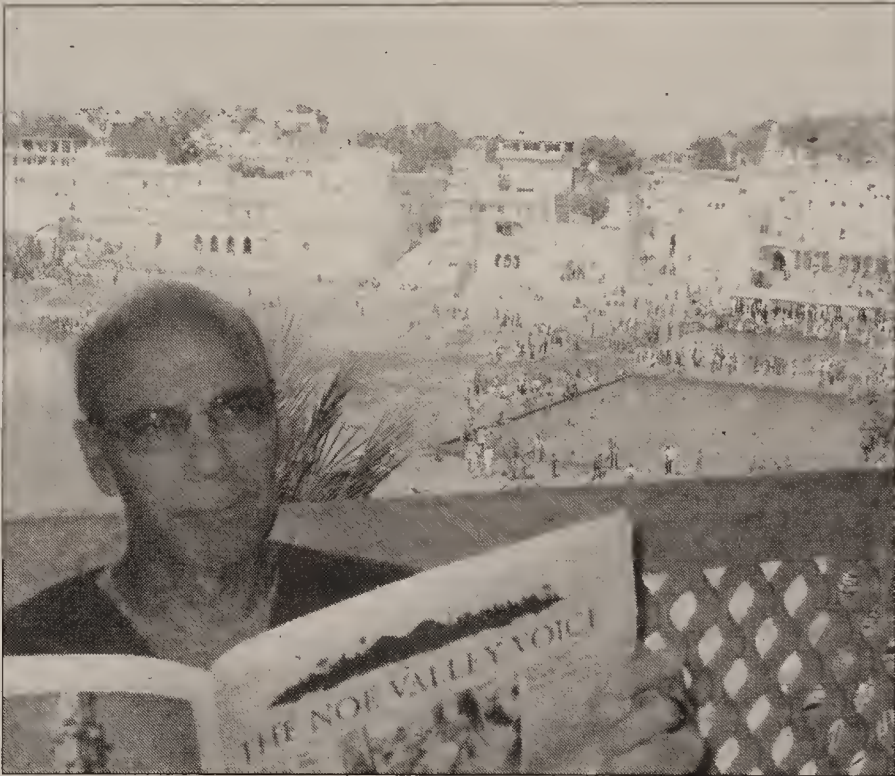


Looking for more lovely readers?

See pages 2 and 27.



Margaret Bean (center) is visited by her friends from the Noe Valley Ministry, **Susan Olney** (left) and pastor **Keenan Kelsey**. The two traveled to Margaret's current home in Antigua, Guatemala and remembered to bring her a copy of the *Noe Valley Voice*.



Robert Gregory and his wife **Jan** have been *Noe Valley Voice* readers for over 20 years while they raised their two boys on Kronquist Court. In 2009, they made their first trip without the kids since 1983. This photo was taken while visiting Pushakar, Rajasthan, India in November.



Travel specialist **Paula Gerhardt** pauses to read the hometown news while her long boat guide takes a break during a recent tour of Vietnam and Cambodia. You can reach Paula at ValueVacation.com and this long-time Noe Valley resident will fill you in on how to duplicate her trip.



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Photo by Jack Tipple

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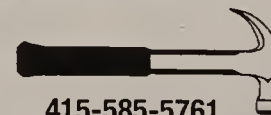
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SHORT TAKES

Tango One Night, Fiddle the Next

Temperatures should rise on three nights in February, when sizzling tango and heart-thumpin' bluegrass make their annual visits to the Noe Valley Ministry.

The creative quartet Tango No. 9 arrives on Friday, Feb. 12, with "Tango for the New Decade," an evening of nuevo tango and dance hosted by the Noe Valley Music Series.

Inspired by Astor Piazzolla, the controversial Argentine composer who stirred up traditional tango with elements of classical music and jazz, Tango No. 9 is Joshua Raoul Brody on piano, Isabel Douglass on accordion, Greg Stephens on trombone, and Catharine Clune on violin. The group will be joined on stage by singer Zoltan Lundy, accordion player Rob Reich, and dancers Mila Salazar, Count Glover, Rose Vierling, and Jessie Dishart.

Tickets for the event cost \$15 in advance and \$17 at the door. The Ministry is at 1021 Sanchez Street near 23rd Street, and the show begins at 8:15 p.m.

Not 24 hours later, the wood floors in the church's upstairs hall will shake with the boot-stomping gospel of Fret Not, as the Music Series hosts its part of the 11th annual San Francisco Bluegrass & Old-Time Festival. Led by singer Lori Arthur, Fret Not promises to lift the spirits of disheartened urbanites with strong harmonies emanating from both African-American and white church traditions. Also slated for the Feb. 13 gig are the bands Family Lines and the Wranglers. Family Lines is a folk-blues-roots trio

composed of vocalist Susan Nielsen, guitarist Tim McDonald, and veteran plucker Ken Frankel. Fronting the Wranglers is banjo player Warren Hellman, whom you might recognize as founder of the Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival in Golden Gate Park. The night starts at 7:30, and tickets are \$16 advance/\$18 at the door.

The festival continues at the Ministry the following Friday, Feb. 19, with Portland bluegrass band Jackstraw, the Black Crown Stringband, and the Crooked Jades, who mix African and European sounds with Americana roots music. Tickets cost \$18 and \$20 for this show, which also starts at 7:30 p.m.

You can pick up advance tickets at Phoenix Books, 3957 24th Street near Noe Street. For more information, visit www.noevalleymusicseries.com or www.sfbgrass.org, or call 415-454-5238.

How Do I Love Thee? Let Me Count the 11 Ways

Friends of the San Francisco Library is hosting its third annual "Poets 11," a poetry contest in each of the city's supervisorial districts that concludes with a published anthology of winning selections.

Judged by San Francisco's former poet laureate Jack Hirschman, the contest is a platform for both new and established poets. There are no rules about style, length, or form, and past submissions have ranged from lightly humorous to heavily political, says Sarah Rosedale, coordinator of the event. Even language is open—Hirschman is a multilingual poetry translator, and he encourages writers to submit work in their native language.

"The poems really reflect the neighborhoods well," says Rosedale, who manages Book Bay Fort Mason, a bookstore run by the Friends.

Submissions of up to three poems are due March 1. Hirschman will select three



The group Tango No. 9, featuring (left to right) Isabel Douglass on accordion, Joshua Raoul Brody on piano, Catharine Clune on violin, and Greg Stephens on trombone, performs Friday, Feb. 12, at the Noe Valley Music Series. Photo by Anne Hamersky

winning poets from each district, who will join him and read their work at a local branch library. District 8 winners will read at the Eureka Valley Library Tuesday, April 20, at 7 p.m. All the winning poets come together May 8 for a reading in the Main Library's Koret Auditorium. Winners also receive a \$50 honorarium.

Last year, Noe Valley's District 8 sent in at least 60 submissions—about 15 percent of the total, says Rosedale. Noe Valley resident Stanley Kiesel was one of the district's three winners.

Entrants must be 18 years or older and live in one of San Francisco's 11 districts. Poems can be emailed to poets11@friendssfpl.org, dropped off at any branch library, or mailed to Poets 11, Book Bay Fort Mason, Fort Mason Center, Building C, San Francisco, CA 94123.

For more information on guidelines, a map of city districts, and a submissions form, visit www.friendssfpl.org.

Where to Meet a Caterpillar

This spring, visitors to Noe Courts park can learn about the birds and the bees as these winged pollinators buzz around a new habitat garden planted last month by neighbors, including 30 children.

Nestled in a planter that runs along the

24th Street side of the playground (at Douglass), the 3-by-12-foot garden houses 15 different plants that attract honeybees, butterflies, and hummingbirds year-round, says Beth Saiki, a Noe Valley mother of two who helped organize the planting.

Depending on the season, you will see monarch butterfly eggs under milkweed leaves, swallowtail caterpillars eating the leaves of ceanothus plants, butterflies sipping nectar from yarrow, and hummingbirds visiting the currant shrub, she says.

Habitat gardens are magical, but don't expect the tidy display of a manicured garden, says Saiki. Fallen leaves will remain on the ground to shelter butterfly eggs, and caterpillars will munch some plants to tatters come spring. Mud puddles are prized as a source of drinking water for butterflies.

The project grew out of a \$3,000 grant from First Five San Francisco that Saiki and 11 other neighborhood families secured in 2008 (see July 2009 Voice).

"It was a big community-building experience," says Saiki. In preparation, the families took a workshop in habitat gardening offered by Susan Prentice, owner of the plant nursery Independent Nature on Church Street. A store employee and a Recreation and Park Department employee helped design the layout of the plants. The garden was installed by the families and their kids on Jan. 9.

Now that planting is done, the grant families will post educational signs describing the garden and the importance of the bees and butterflies it serves. Then they will take turns maintaining it.

City's Top Money Analysts at Demo Club

City Assessor Phil Ting and San Francisco Budget Director Leo Levenson will be the featured speakers at the next meeting of the Noe Valley Democratic Club, Wednesday, Feb. 17, at 7:30 p.m. According to Molly Fleischman, vice president of the club, each will talk about the serious financial challenges now faced by city government.

"As the two men come from two differing perspectives—one assesses and collects taxes, one analyzes revenues and projects expenditures—these two per-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33



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A Noe Street Window with curtains drawn against the late winter sun.

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SHORT TAKES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

spectives should be interesting to explore," says Fleischman, noting that Ting is often mentioned as a possible candidate for mayor.

Fleischman encourages those attending the meeting to voice their concerns and opinions at a Q&A session following the presentations. Refreshments will be served, and all are welcome to the event, at St. Philip's Church, 725 Diamond Street at Elizabeth Street. For more information, contact Fleischman at 415-641-5838 or molly@ffrsf.com.

Get Your Geek On

Noe Valley will be home to a high-tech scavenger hunt Saturday, Feb. 6, when friends and family from Alvarado Elementary School fan out, flashlights and phone cameras in hand, to show off their neighborhood knowledge.

Teams of participants will be given a map with clues to decipher. The clues lead to various locations in Noe Valley, where members take a photo of the answer and email it back to the home base.

"It's a scavenger hunt meets block party," says organizer Tim Smith, who heads the school's technology committee. The event is also a fundraiser, and Smith has already secured sponsorship from Google, Geeknet, Salesforce.com, and Circle Bank. District 8 supervisor candidates Rafael Mandelman, Rebecca Prozan, Laura Spanjian, and Scott Wiener have also thrown their hats in the ring.

Smith says the school hopes to raise \$15,000—enough money to provide working computers for every classroom.

The hunt starts at 6 p.m. at the school's cafeteria on 22nd Street between Douglass and Eureka. Two hours later, everyone will meet at the Dubliner Bar on 24th Street and compare notes. Prizes from Geeknet and Electronic Arts will be awarded, and the winning team gets a free round of drinks. To join the fun, visit the website at www.techsearchparty.com.

Restoration Sheds Light on Bernal Library

The Bernal Heights Branch Library, 500 Cortland Avenue, reopened last month after a two-year, \$5.7 million renovation. The facelift has turned a windowless basement into a light-filled Children's Room, which now opens onto the adjacent Bernal Heights playground.

The new Children's Room replaced a preschool run by City College, which moved out before renovations began in February 2008. There had always been a community room downstairs, but now the space is more inviting, says Michelle Jeffers, a spokesperson for the San Francisco Public Library.

Built in 1940 by the Works Project Administration, a Depression-era job creation program, the library saw a restoration of its original hand-painted stencils on the ceiling and ornate light fixtures. Wood veneers were refinished to match the original woodwork in the branch, and a new Beaux Arts staircase connects the basement to the main floor. The renovation was designed by the Library Design Studio, a division of the Department of Public Works (DPW).

"Just as the WPA provided much needed jobs for public works projects across San Francisco, the Branch Library

Keeping Track of Rail Repairs

By Heather World

J-Church riders—and Noe Valley residents who live near the streetcar line—are especially invited to attend this month's meeting of Upper Noe Neighbors. Muni staff will be on hand Thursday, Feb. 18, to discuss plans to replace tracks along certain segments of the J.

Ha Nguyen, manager of the upcoming rail replacement project, is one of three transportation officials scheduled to speak and answer questions at the 7:30 p.m. meeting at Upper Noe Recreation Center, on Day Street near Sanchez.

The upcoming repairs will happen in two stages. On the first three weekends in March, crews will work around the clock, from Friday at 6 p.m. to Monday at 5 a.m., to replace track on San Jose Avenue at 30th Street. Work on the tracks at 30th and Church streets is scheduled for September. Shuttle buses will cover the route on the weekends the repairs take place.

The project is part of a \$18 million campaign to replace old track, repave roads, and fix power poles and signals at

busy intersections. Portions of the L and N lines have already been upgraded.

"The first weekend on one of those projects we did get some complaints related to loss of parking around traffic detours," says Judson True, spokesman for the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, Muni's parent organization. "Our goal is to make sure people know what to expect."

The 24-hour weekend schedule was set up to avoid disrupting weekday service, True says.

Vicki Rosen, president of Upper Noe Neighbors, says she plans to ask Muni how it will handle the noise issue for the houses that face 30th Street. "We'll be watching what's going on down on San Jose to see how much of an impact that has, so we'll be ready," says Rosen.

Muni has worked with the neighborhood before to quiet the screech of trains rounding the 30th and Church corner, she says. "I have to hand it to them—they did a pretty damn good job."

Hopefully the rail replacement will make it easier to keep the train noise down, she says.

For more information about the meeting, contact Rosen at 415-285-0473 or vickimrosen@gmail.com. ■

Improvement Program today is providing work for architects, contractors, tradespeople, and laborers to rebuild libraries across the city," says Ed Reiskin, director of DPW.

Bernal Heights is the 13th of 16 branch libraries to be renovated under the Branch Library Improvement Program, which is funded by a \$105.9 million bond measure passed by voters in 2000. The program includes the construction of eight new libraries as well.

The Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, together with the Bernal Heights Library Campaign Committee, will contribute about \$500,000 toward the branch renovation to pay for furnishings, fixtures, and equipment not covered by the bond. For more information, contact Marian Chatfield-Taylor at marian.ctaylor@friendssfpl.org.

This month's Short Takes were written by Heather World.

Last Call for Garden Tour

At press time, Friends of Noe Valley sent this alert about the Noe Valley Garden Tour:

The fourth Noe Valley Garden Tour will be held the second weekend in June, on June 12, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Six to eight gardens will be selected to be on the tour, which is sponsored by the Friends of Noe Valley neighborhood association. Proceeds from the tour will go to help finance neighborhood beautification projects for Noe Valley.

If you would like your garden or a neighbor's garden to be on the public tour, please contact Richard May at 298-2344 no later than Feb. 28. Nominated gardens will be inspected during March, and final selections made by March 31.

Gardens can be of any theme. Each garden must have private access. Volunteers will be stationed at the garden entrance to take and sell tickets, answer questions, and monitor access. Homeowners are encouraged, but not required, to be on hand to talk to their visitors. Nominations from individuals and landscaping firms both are welcomed. Proposals for neighborhood beautification projects are also due by Feb. 28. Requirements are that projects be in a public space for all to enjoy within the boundaries of Noe Valley: Grand View/Diamond Heights Boulevard on the west, 30th Street on the south, Guerrero on the east and 21st Street on the north. Please also call May to discuss possible beautification projects.

Desired: Prom Dresses

Prom night is an adolescent fairy tale, but for some girls that date spells images of Cinderella, who was too poor to afford a dress for the ball. Enter the fairy godmothers—chic Noe Valley women who donate dresses to the Princess Project. Since 2002, the Princess Project has collected gently used dresses and accessories that wind up on racks at spring giveaway events for high school teens. Girls who cannot otherwise afford a prom outfit are invited to select something that is right for them. In its first year, the Princess Project gave away 250 dresses, says board member Melissa Murray. Last year, 3,000 dresses flew off the racks, and this year they expect to distribute 4,000, she says.

The Princess Project asks that donated dresses be contemporary and suitably elegant for a high school prom. They should be dry-cleaned and hung on a hanger. Jewelry, purses, and wraps in good condition are also needed, though the group cannot accept shoes or makeup.

Dresses are being accepted through March and April at these San Francisco locations: Bar Method (3 Embarcadero Center and 3333 Fillmore Street), the Blue Jeans Bar (1827 Union Street), Marc by Marc Jacobs on Fillmore (2142 Fillmore Street), and the YMCA Presidio (63 Funston Avenue).

To learn more, or to host a dress drive, visit www.princessproject.org.

—Heather World

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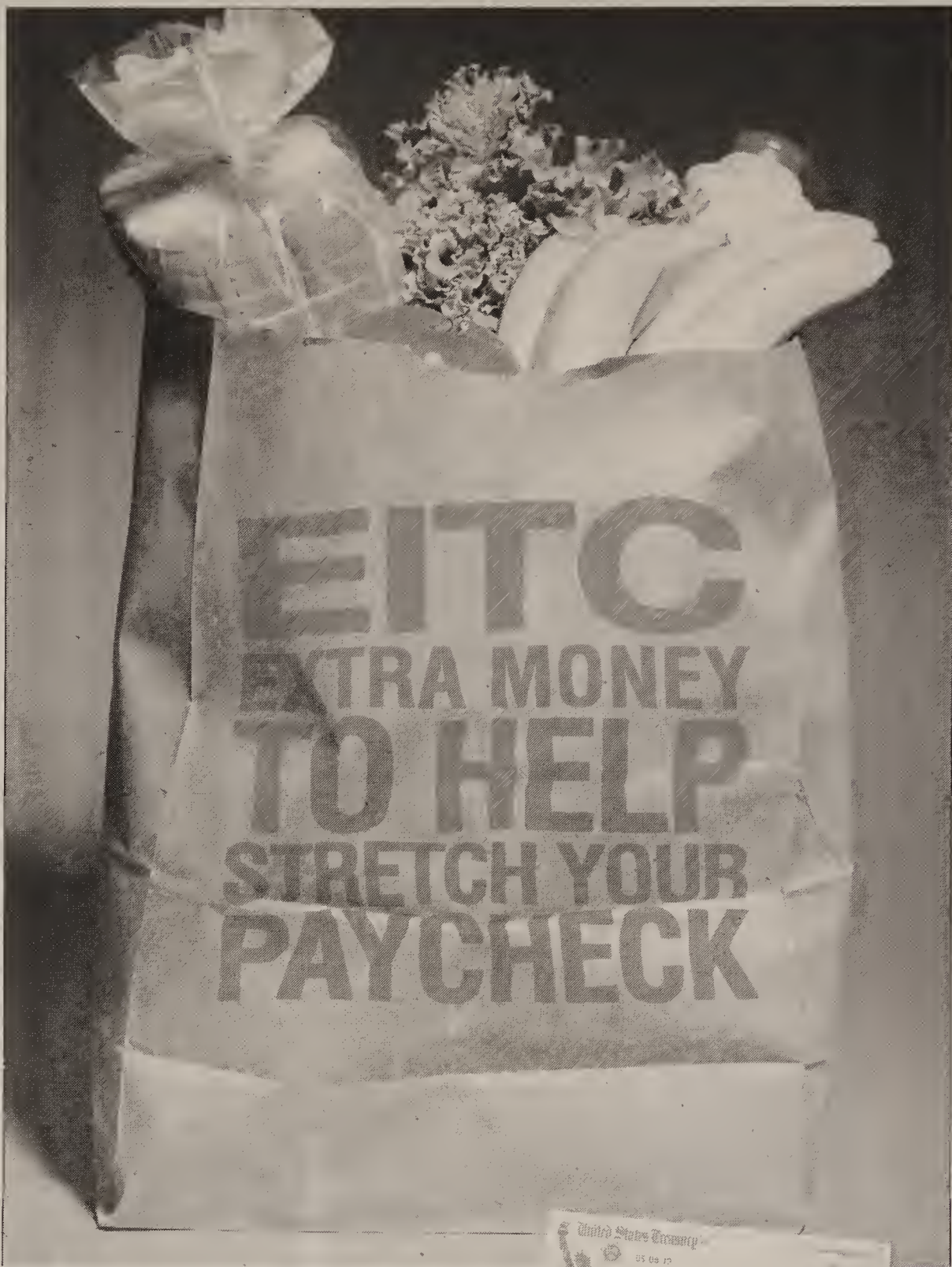
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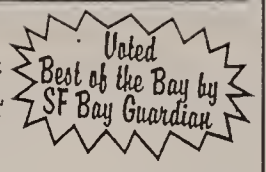
Hospice care is a team program for terminally ill patients and their caregivers which supports patients in remaining home for as long as possible. Volunteers provide companionship, caregiver relief, and other support to families and caregivers. All volunteers are provided extensive training and ongoing support and education. Once trained, they have the freedom to structure their hours during the week or evenings and weekends.

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MARCH

STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular *Voice* feature profiling new stores and businesses in Noe Valley. This month, we introduce a budding plant and garden supply store on Church Street and a title company on 24th boasting a 103-year-old pedigree.

INDEPENDENT NATURE

1504 Church Street at 27th Street
415-642-1708

Thinking of growing your own food? There's a store in the neighborhood that would love to get you started along the garden path.

Independent Nature, a plant nursery that opened in October at Church and 27th streets, specializes in native and drought-tolerant plants and herbs, and edibles such as artichokes, lettuces, and kale. In addition to the gardening basics, the shop carries recycled tools, pots, garden books, soil, and a small selection of houseplants.

Part of the store's interior space is shared with the When Modern Was furniture store; both shops occupy a former garage and back yard that was once home to the popular Mia's Flowers.

Owner Susan Prentice brings 30 years of professional gardening experience to her first retail business, along with a desire to make "gardening accessible to all of us."

"Lots of people are growing gardens for the first time," Prentice says. Her goal is to help them see "you can grow food without having a whole farm."

Prentice says she and staffer Kathleen Manly, who comes with prior nursery experience and a degree in ecology, are pleased to give planting tips at the shop. In addition, they offer home garden design and consultation services.

Many of their new customers have decided to start small, Prentice says, by purchasing items like a \$2.69 pot of mint. (She chalks it up to the "mojito craze.")

With a focus on California native plants, Independent Nature stocks some unique varieties, including *Ribes sanguineum*, a native currant with bright pink flowers (\$7.99 in the one-gallon size). "This great, mid-sized shrub is underused in the home garden," says Prentice.

Because she wants "to connect people with sustainability," her shop sells no chemical fertilizers. What she recommends instead is organic compost—your own or a product such as E.B. Stone Or-



Susan Prentice's Independent Nature now graces the former home of Mia's Flowers with a fresh generation of plants and garden accessories. Photos by Pamela Gerard

ganic Compost (\$7.99). "Seaweed is another organic fertilizer."

She chose Noe Valley for her store location because "the neighborhood was a good match without being too trendy."

"It's a sunny site," says Prentice, and sunlight was one of the things she needed to grow vegetables or plants in a small garden plot behind the store. "You can create shade but not sun," she laughs.

Prentice, who has a horticulture degree from City College, also teaches organic gardening. In December, she held a class on habitat growing for Noe Valley's Butterfly and Bee group (see *Short Takes*). Her next class, on spring planting, will be offered in March.

Prentice also stocks beekeeping supplies for those interested in starting a hive.

Though Independent Nature doesn't have its own website, Prentice maintains an email list for customers and those interested in taking classes.

"All of a sudden everyone is speaking my language, growing their own food, being self-sufficient," says Prentice.

Independent Nature is open daily except Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and on Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. Prentice plans to extend the shop's hours in the spring. Her email address is independent_nature_plant@gmail.com.

OLD REPUBLIC TITLE COMPANY

4045 24th Street at Castro Street
415-282-0830

The recent arrival of Old Republic Title Company on 24th Street completes the constellation of real estate services offered in Noe Valley.

In a bright and spacious office at 4045

24th Street formerly occupied by the automobile service club AAA, a staff of eight now provides title, escrow, and real estate services for residential and commercial buyers and sellers.

Old Republic, a 103-year-old company based in Minneapolis, Minn., relocated its local branch to Noe Valley from a third-floor space at Market and Duboce streets on Nov. 1.

"We looked for two years in Upper Market and Noe Valley. This place was ideal because of its proximity to real estate offices and banks. We're right next door to Wells Fargo," says Old Republic Branch Manager Chris Matthews. Old Republic is the only title company in the neighborhood, according to Matthews.

The state-regulated firm acts as a neutral middle man between buyers and sellers—holding funds and documents for the two sides until real estate transactions are finalized. It also offers notary services.

Matthews says most home buyers or sellers are referred by real estate agents. However, in the two months since the company opened in Noe Valley, "many people have walked in off the street with questions. Walk-ins are possible because there are people available—escrow officers and assistants, sales and customer service representatives."

Senior Vice President Bonnie Manning says the company experienced a good year in 2009.

"Old Republic's numbers [of closings] are up for last year, particularly during the last half of last year. We are still strong in the refinance market and re-sale," she says.

The firm plans to strengthen its ties with the local community by joining the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association.

Old Republic is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

—By Karen Topakian



Old Republic on 24th Street is represented by (left to right) Sandy Churton, Christine Lim, Bonnie Manning, Chris Matthews, Michelle Patterson, Terry Pizzo, and Doug Leonard.

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features the current issue's news and Class Ads. The site also is our archive for Voice issues from 1996 to the present. Older editions, dating back to 1977, are stored at the San Francisco Main Library. You can also find recent copies at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library.



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Sunshine in January warms the families hanging out at Noe Valley's Farmers Market.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



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SCHOOL REPORT

The kids, parents, and staff at James Lick and Alvarado schools are raring to go, with fitness, art, and fundraising programs.

Spiking, Dunking, and Cycling into 2010

By Heidi Anderson

While P.E. is a part of every kid's day at James Lick School, now it's a part of lunch, too.

This fall, Kyle Noone got together with his fellow P.E. teachers to organize an array of supervised sports that kids can play during lunchtime. Among the top calorie-burners are basketball, soccer, volleyball, badminton, wrestling, and even "boot camp" exercise in the school's fitness center. With funding and equipment from the school district's PAPA program (Physical Activities, Positive Alternatives), the sports program has been a big success.

"It's really been great for the kids," says Principal Bitá Nazarian, who knows that middle school students often need to let off steam in the middle of the day. "Organized sports is a natural way to get exercise, and team-building is so important in middle school."

40 Bikes Roll Up

As if all that running around at lunch weren't enough, starting in February students will be learning bicycle skills. Seventy kids have signed up for a two-week course, which will include tips on riding mechanics and maneuvers, and on safe biking on city streets. What's really ex-

citing is that in addition to the lesson plans, the Presidio YMCA has supplied a fleet of 40 bicycles.

Tired yet? Not the kids! Another group of students has gotten together to help beat the Guinness World Record for the most people jumping rope at the same time. Approximately 80,000 Californians, all of whom officially signed up for the challenge with the California Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, will be jumping rope from 9 to 9:10 a.m. on Feb. 1. As the *Voice* went to press, 200 James Lick students were standing by with ropes in hand.

But wait, there's one more feat to mention. James Lick alums Brad and Devin Henderson will be performing in the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, British Columbia, Feb. 12 to 28. Many longtime Lick families will remember the acrobatic shows that all four of the Hendersons—Brad, Sadie, Devin, and Marta—put on at school while they attended Lick. The four trained from an early age at the Pickle Family Circus here in San Francisco. Brad graduated a few years ago from École Nationale de Cirque in Montreal (where Devin is now attending) and is touring with *Les 7 Doigts de la Main* (the Seven Fingers), a Montreal-based circus troupe. Devin will graduate from the school in 2011.

Recession? What Recession?

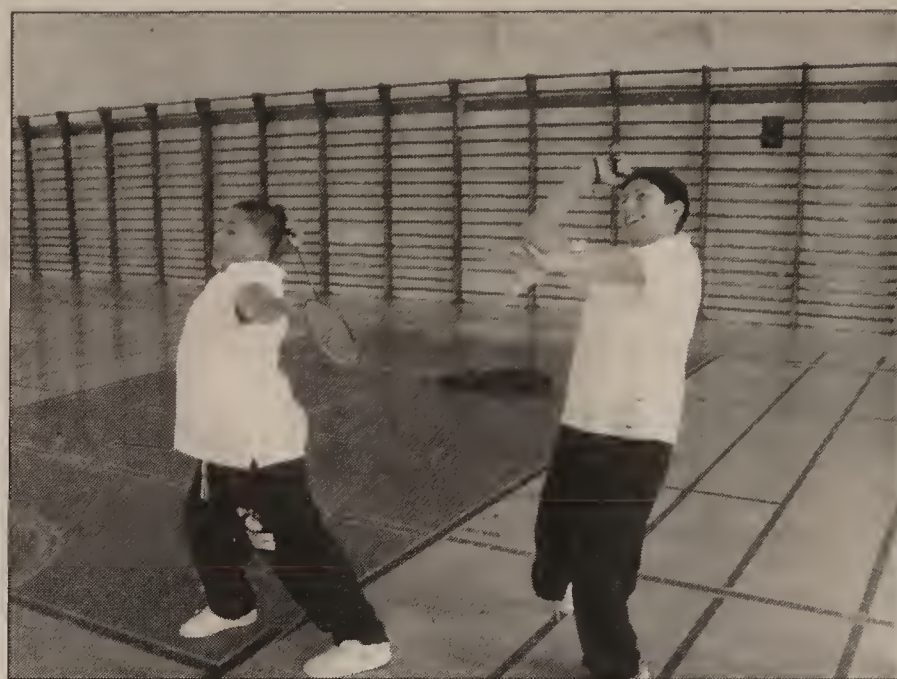
In the face of big budget cuts (something virtually every public school in California is grappling with), the Lick auction committee is pulling out its donation forms, dusting off the auctioneer microphone, and kicking it up a notch to bring more money to the school's classrooms. Last year, the auction brought in \$16,000, and this year the goal is \$18,000.

"Last year, everybody said you'll have such a hard time raising money, what with the economy," says auction co-chair Nadine Kessler. "But we made more than ever!"

Kessler, and co-chairs Nancy Windenheim and Elizabeth Sinclair, are applying the same can-do attitude this year. The committee's first meeting in February promises to be full of ideas to get an auction-loving public to the event.

Lick's auction is held at the Noe Valley Ministry on Sanchez Street. This year it will be Saturday, April 17, beginning at 6 p.m. The evening will feature a silent and live auction and deeJay entertainment, beverages, and light appetizers.

Donations from neighbors and merchants are warmly welcomed. Can you provide gift certificates for a local store? Have a professional service you can donate? Please contact Nadine at nadine.kessler@sbcglobal.net or call the school at 695-5675 and leave a message for the PTA auction committee. ■



What a smash! James Lick seventh-graders Carlos Cartegena and Rogelio Rodriguez (right) look good practicing their badminton shots in the school gym. Photo courtesy Chris Loughran

Make a Bid on Alvarado

By Heather World

Want to see the fruits of an arts program that is generously supported by the merchants and residents of Noe Valley? Come to Alvarado Elementary School's 17th annual Not-So-Silent Auction on Saturday, March 20. Titled "Fiesta en el Jardín de Arte," this year's auction will reflect the school's Latino influence and its commitment to art in education.

During February, Alvarado's students will gather by classroom to make furniture, wall art, blankets, and dishes to put up for auction in the "Garden of Art."

Once the big event arrives, bidders can do battle or pool their money to buy one-of-a-kind art works, gift certificates from local stores, hikes in the San Bruno Mountains, or gingerbread-making parties for future Iron Chefs. A silent auction before the live bidding will offer summer camp packages, hotel stays, and other big-ticket items.

Local Stores Are Loyal Donors

Many of the auction items come from merchant donations, which remain strong despite the sputtering economy. Bill Hoover, who owns 24th Street's Gallery of Jewels with his wife Dona Taylor, has been donating to local schools ever since his Noe Valley site opened 20 years ago.

"It's one of those things where you give a little and you get a little," says Hoover, who started issuing gift certificates when his son was at Noe Valley's Debra King Preschool. The school gets the money, and the store gets more pairs of eyes looking over the jewelry of its 120 designers. ■

Cover to Cover bookstore on Castro Street has been another strong supporter.

"This neighborhood has been very good to us," says Mark Ezarik, who owns the shop with Tracy Wynne. "Anything we can do to give back to the neighborhood, we're very happy to do so."

Ezarik and Wynne make schools a priority, he says. "There are a lot of worthwhile causes, but we always give to the schools because they always need it."

In turn, Alvarado families make shopping locally a priority, says auction co-chair Diane Smith.

"We feel fortunate to be in Noe Valley, where the generous businesses also happen to be great places to shop," she says.

Tickets to the March 20 auction cost \$30 and will buy you food, beer and wine, and a rollicking good time. Neighbors, friends, and prospective Alvarado parents are all invited. The party runs from 6 to 11 p.m., at the Janet Pomeroy Center, 207 Skyline Boulevard.

Don't forget to stay until 10:30 p.m., when the Grand Raffle drawing takes place. Raffle tickets cost \$10 each, with a price break for those who buy in blocks of five or 10 tickets. Winners will get a Napa getaway, a Netbook, and a digital camera, though they can always opt for the cash prizes of \$500, \$300, and \$150, respectively. Tickets will be for sale at the Saturday Noe Valley Farmers' Market for the three weekends before the auction.

All proceeds from the auction and raffle go to the PTA and help fund the school's educational, arts, and outdoor programs.

For more information, raffle, and auction tickets, or to donate an item, visit www.alvaradoschool.net. You are also welcome to contact Alvarado School, 625 Douglass Street, at 695-5695. ■

SCHOOL CONTACTS

James Lick Middle School
Bitá Nazarian, Principal
1220 Noe Street at 25th Street
415-695-5675
www.jameslickpta.org

Alvarado Elementary School
Robert Broecker, Principal
625 Douglass Street at Alvarado Street
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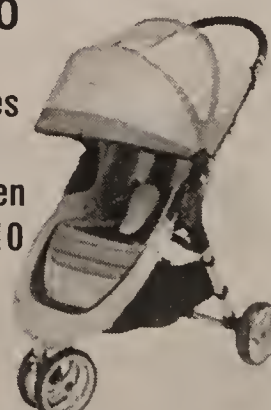
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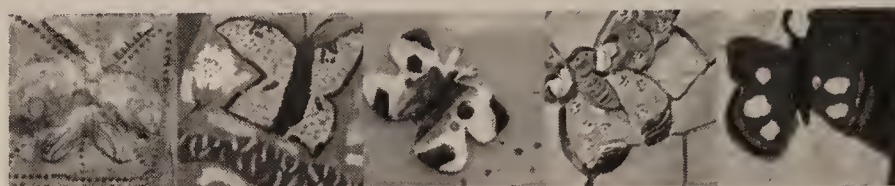


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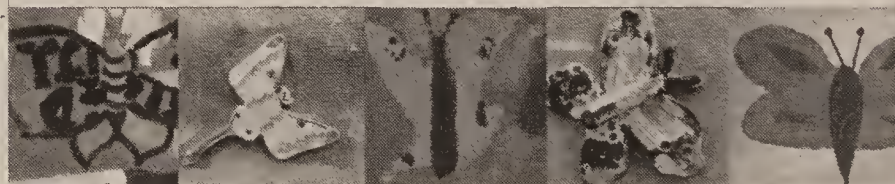
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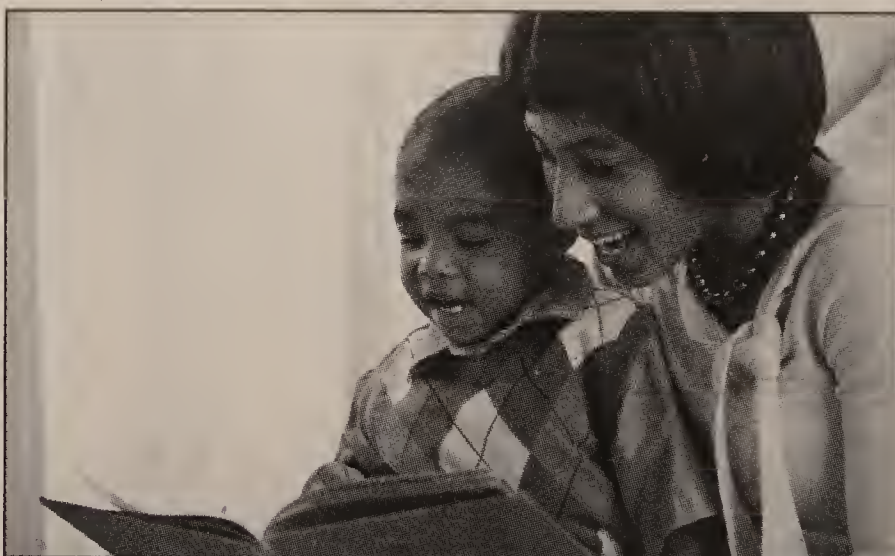
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Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

Contacts: Pat Lockhart, 282-9360; Diane McCarney, 824-0303; or Deanna Mooney, 821-4045
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Eureka Valley Promotion Association

Contact: Scott Wiener, President, 437-9414
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114
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Mailing Address: 261 Fair Oaks St., San Francisco, CA 94110
Note: The annual Fair Oaks Street Fair is held the day before Mother's Day.

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN**Fairmount Heights Neighborhood Association**

Contact: Gregg Brooks
Email: sflyric@yahoo.com
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31059, San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Email for details.

Friends of Billy Goat Hill

Contact: Mo Ghotbi, 821-0122
<http://friendsofbillygoathill.blogspot.com>

Friends of Dolores Park Playground

Contact: Eli Merritt, 285-3774
Email: emerr@earthlink.net
Mailing Address: 3786 20th St., San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Email for information.

Friends of Glen Canyon Park

Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862
Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Call for details.

Friends of Noe Courts Playground

Contact: Laura Norman
Email: lauranor@yahoo.com
Mailing Address: c/o Friends of Noe Valley, P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146
Meetings: Email for dates and times.

Friends of Noe Valley (FNV)

Contact: Richard May, 298-2344
Website: www.friendsofnoevalley.com
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146
Meetings: Occasional (call to confirm); at St. Philip's Parish Hall, 725 Diamond St.

Friends of On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center

Contact: Marianne Hampton, 601-7845
Mailing Address: 225 30th St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Occasional. Call for details.

Friends of Noe Valley Recreation Center and Park

Contact: Alexandra Torre
Email: noe_park@atorre.com
Website: www.noevalleyreccenter.com
Meetings: Email or check website.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

Contact: John Barbey, 695-0990
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 192114, San Francisco, CA 94119
Meetings: Quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Screenwriting Discussion Group

Contact: Kendall Callas, 821-1310
Email: kendall@microcounsel.com
Meetings: Monthly; e-mail for details.
Pre-requisite: Completed a screenplay or a screenwriting course.

Noe Strolls "Playgroup on Wheels"

Contact: noestrolls@aol.com
Weekly Stroll: Thursday at 11 a.m., departing Holey Bagel, 3872 24th St.
For details, visit www.noestrolls.com.

Noe Valley Association—24th Street Community Benefit District

Contact: Debra Niemann, nemo@rcn.com
Dispatch: To report spills, debris, or garbage on 24th Street, call 559-8492.
Also see www.noevalleyassociation.org.

Noe Valley Democratic Club

Contact: Andy Fleischman, 641-5838
Meetings: Third Wednesday, St. Philip's Church, 725 Diamond St., 7:30 p.m.
Parking available in lot off Elizabeth. Call to confirm meeting dates.

Noe Valley Farmers' Market

Open Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., on 24th Street between Vicksburg and Sanchez.
Contact: Leslie Crawford, 248-1332
Mailing Address: 4101 24th St., #401, San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Second Thursday, Noe Valley Ministry (co-sponsor), 1021 Sanchez St., 8 p.m.

Noe Valley Library Campaign

Contacts: Kim Drew, 643-4695, kkdrew@yahoo.com; Marian Chatfield-Taylor, 626-7512, ext. 103
Mailing Address: Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, 391 Grove St., San Francisco, CA 94102

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA)

Contact: Robert T. Roddick, 641-8687
Email: info@noevalleymerchants.com
Meetings: Last Wednesday, Bank of America, 4098 24th St., 9 a.m.
Mixers: See www.noevalleymerchants.com.

Noe Valley Parent Network

An e-mail resource network for parents
Contact: Mina Kenvin
Email: minaken@gmail.com

Noe Valley Preparedness Committee

Contact: Maxine Fasulis, 641-5536
Email: mfasulis@yahoo.com
Meetings: Call for details.

Outer Noe Valley Merchants

Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500
Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Call for details.

San Jose/Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets

Contact: Don Oshiro, 285-8188
Email: contact@sanjoseguerrero.com
Website: www.sanjoseguerrero.com
Meetings: See website.

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Email: sf@seejanerun.com
Address: 3910 24th St. (at Sanchez)
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Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473
Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Third Thursday of the month.
Upper Noe Recreation Center, Day and Sanchez, 7:30 p.m.

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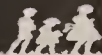
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MORE BOOKS TO READ

By Noe Valley Librarian Susan Higgins

It's a new year, and with the cold and rainy weather you may be spending more time at home, thinking about "de-cluttering" your environment, getting better organized, or planning home improvements. Need help with ideas? Try these resources, all available through your local public library.

Resources to Organize Your Life

■ **The Only 127 Things You Need: A Guide to Life's Essentials**, by Donna Wilkinson, offers advice on how to simplify your life and reduce clutter. Authorities on health, fashion, housing, and psychology recommend what to keep and what to throw away.

■ **The Urban Homestead: Your Guide to Self-Sufficient Living in the Heart of the City**, by Kelly Coyne and Erik Knutzen, contains step-by-step projects for growing and preserving your own food within the limitations of small city spaces.

■ **Cut Your Energy Bills Now** by Bruce Harley contains 150 projects and tips that will make your home more comfortable and green. Contains many color photographs.

■ **Haley's Hints Green Edition**, by Graham and Rosemary Haley, offers more than 1,000 hints for cleaning and home repair using nontoxic household products.

Read Consumer Reports For Free

Did you know that articles from *Consumer Reports* magazine are available on the San Francisco Public Library's website? With your library card number and PIN, you can search for articles in the current and back issues from any computer with Internet access. Here's how:

- Go to www.sfpl.org.
- Click on the link to Articles and Databases.
- Scroll down the list of Articles and News databases and click on EBSCO-Host Magazines MasterFILE Premier. You will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN.
- Now you'll see the home page for EBSCOHost Magazines. Click on Advanced Search.
- Type your topic in the box at the top of the screen, for example, toasters. Then scroll down to the box labeled Publication, and type *Consumer Reports*. Then click the blue Search button at the bottom of the page.
- You'll see a list of articles containing the word toasters. To read an article, click on its PDF full text or HTML full text link.

The library also has print copies of the last 18 months of *Consumer Reports*, which you can use while you're in the branch.

—Susan Higgins

New Books for Children and Teens

Picture stories for young children:

■ **Chicken Soup** by Jean Van Leeuwen is a delightful farm story for reading aloud.

■ **Herb the Vegetarian Dragon** by Jules Bass is a story about how meat eaters learned to live in peace and harmony with a garden-loving dragon.

■ **In Oli My Gosh, Mrs. McNosh** by Sarah Weeks a dog chases after a mischievous squirrel and literally crashes a wedding.

Fiction for older children:

■ Kristen Tracy's **Cauille McPhee Fell Under the Bus** is the humorous story of a resilient fourth-grader who copes with a variety of challenges. *Grades 3-5.*

■ **Return to Groosham Grange** by Anthony Horowitz is the sequel to the humorous horror story at boarding school *Groosham Grange*. *Grades 5-7.*

■ **Return to the Hundred-Acre Wood** by David Benedictus. Winnie-the-Pooh enjoys new adventures with Christopher Robin and his friends in a new book that captures the spirit of the original works of A. A. Milne. *Grades 1-4.*

Fiction for teens:

■ **The Glass Maker's Daughter** by V. Brice-land offers magic, suspense, and a strong-willed heroine in a medieval setting.

■ A 14-year-old boy is determined to be the last member of his family to die from lightning strikes, in **Jolted: Newton Starker's Rules for Survival**, by Arthur Slade.

■ **Secret Keeper** by Mitali Perkins is a novel set during the turmoil of 1970s India that explores relationships between mothers, sisters, daughters, and women and men.

LIBRARY EVENTS

Toddler Tales and Story Time

■ Kids 18 months to 3 years old will love the songs and rhymes at *Toddler Tales*, held Tuesdays, Feb. 2, 9, 16, and 23, from 10:15 to 10:40 a.m. *Family Story Time*, for children of all ages, follows on most days at 11 a.m.

Talk About Books

■ The Noe Valley Library's Book Discussion Group meets on Wednesday, Feb. 17, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Rooftop Gardening Made Easy

■ Want to grow flowers or vegetables on your deck? Tips on rooftop gardening will be presented in partnership with the Garden for the Environment on Saturday, March 6, 2 to 3 p.m.

All events take place at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey Street near Castro Street; 415-355-5707.



CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Noe Valley Star Map by Michael Blake

L	O	C	H		F	D	I	C		C	R	A	F	T
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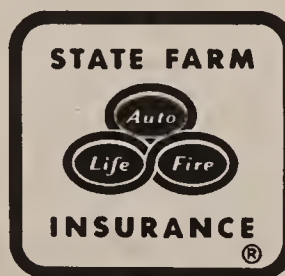
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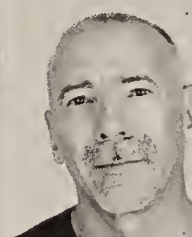
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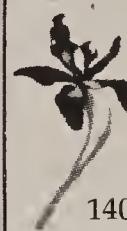
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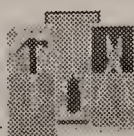
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Furnished Office for Rent. Dolores Street at 29th. Commercial office space with recent renovations. Private office available approximately 10 x 10 feet with shared conveniences. Monthly rent includes utilities/Internet/cleaning, and security system. Lease terms to be discussed in person. Creative, fun firm occupies the other offices and is seeking similar tenant. 282-4560.

Would You Like to Have a House Really Clean? We'll be happy to help you. Yolanda and Jose, 415-271-4905.

HOW TO PLACE A CLASS AD

It's easy. Just type or print the text of your ad, multiply the number of words by **40¢ per word**, and send us a check or money order for the total. (Note that a phone number, including area code, counts as one word.) Then mail your ad text and payment, made out to the *Noe Valley Voice*, so that we receive it by the **15th of the month** before the month in which you'd like to advertise. The address is *Noe Valley Voice* Class Ads, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. (Sorry, the *Voice* is unable to accept Class Ads by phone or e-mail.)

10 for 10 discount: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the *same* class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

The next *Voice* will be the **March 2010** issue, distributed in Noe Valley the first week of March. **The deadline for Class Ads is Feb. 15.** Note: The issue will be on the streets one month, and will also be displayed on our site, www.noevalleyvoice.com.

Advertisers should keep in mind that only the first few words of their ad (not to exceed one line) will be set in hold. Also, receipts and tear sheets will be provided only if your order is accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Refunds are not granted unless we have made an error. Thank you for your support.

CLASS ADS

New Year's Resolutions Support. We have the best of intentions when we create our resolutions. Studies show that goals shared with others are more likely to be achieved. Let me help you. I'm a certified yoga/meditation instructor teaching locally and living in Noe Valley for 20 years. I'll provide you with compassionate support and coaching to keep you accountable to your goals, particularly in the area of fitness and well-being. Let my discipline and focus guide you to success. Contact (Ms.) Ernie, 415-845-7436. ernie@satvix.com.

Daily/Weekly Rental: Noe Valley studio apartment. Located on Vicksburg near 23rd Street, it's an alternative to hotels and motels. Private entrance in a garden setting. The unit offers a queen-sized bed, full kitchen with dining area, cable TV, and three-quarter bath. No pets, no smoking. Call Jim at 415-285-6433 or (cell) 415-215-2617.

Garden Cottage in the heart of Noe Valley. Perfect for visiting friends and family. Secluded and detached with private deck. Completely furnished. Queen bed and twin sleeper couch. Fully equipped kitchen. Short-term rental. Minimum two nights. Non-smoking. <http://www.sanfranciscogardencottage.com>. 415-225-6905.

Handyman Mike, 415-756-9896. Carpentry, kitchen cabinets, caulking, decks, dishwasher installation, doors, dry rot, drywall patching, basic electrical, fences, foundation bolting, furniture assembly, garbage disposal, locks, painting, plumbing, pressure washing, shelving, stairs, tile, toilets, windows, woodworking.

Garden Consultant. Need a little help or inspiration? I will help you solve garden problems, visualize your dream garden, implement your ideas, or learn about gardening, including gardening organically, natural pest control, and so much more! Carlin's Gardens—15 years in Noe Valley. Call Carlin, 415-826-3127; email carlinet@fastmail.fm; www.carlinsgardens.com. Carlin's Gardens—Your Nature Connection!

NOE VALLEY VOICE CLASS ADS 40¢ a word!

The deadline is the 15th of the month. Write *Voice* Class Ads, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114.

iMac for Sale. Mac OSX, version 10.4.11. Has speakers but no keyboard. \$110 or best offer. Saumya at 415-282-9990.

Expert Garden and Landscape Services: We do design and installation; regularly scheduled property and garden maintenance; tree pruning, planting, and removals; irrigation and low-voltage lighting systems installation and repair; stonework and hardscaping; cleanups and staging. No job too big or too small. Extremely detail oriented. 16 years in the business. Serving Noe Valley and the greater Bay Area. Excellent references. Call David at 415-846-7581; <http://www.shapeoftheearth.com>.

Gift Certificates/Painting Workshops. One-day watercolor workshops. Great for a gift or just to indulge yourself in learning all the basics of watercolor. Small class size. No materials required. Email sfclark@comcast.net or call 415-641-8882.



Feeling Depressed or Angry in a relationship or work? Perhaps someone suggested you seek help? I will work with you to understand the current situation and past contributing factors. I have much experience working with clients from families of origin with mental illness and substance abuse. I also have expertise working with clients in long-term recovery from substances and childhood trauma as well as codependency. Castro/Noe Valley area. Audrey Adelson, LCSW. 415-260-0337.

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Hypnotherapy/Psychotherapy for Excellence. Live the life you want to live; be all you can be using hypnosis and brief therapy for stress and pain management, phobia and habit control, weight and eating issues, personal development, IBS, addictions, childbirth (certified HypnoBirthing and HypnoBirthing fertility therapist). For more information, contact Tara Economakis, Dip. Adv. Hyp. (N-SHAP), MN-RHP, UKCP registered. UK, European, and USA trained and qualified. 415-920-9956. Email: tara@beco@hotmail.com. Website: www.lastingchanges.co.uk.

Homeopathy Can Transform Your Health and well-being. This holistic medicine is great for children, teens, and adults of all ages. Allow your body and mind to heal itself to resolve chronic health issues, anxiety and depression, and acute illness through homeopathy. Kathleen Scheihle, Certified Homeopath practices in Noe Valley and Bernal Heights. kathleen@bernalhomeopathy.com. <http://www.bernalhomeopathy.com>. 415-647-7919, ext. 2.

Vacation Room Rental. Upper Noe Valley. Clean, quiet, safe. Ideal for visiting family. 415-821-4890, Sue. emarsh5108@aol.com.

Grow Your Own Organic Vegetables and herbs. Be sure it's pure! Great for you, for kids, for the environment. Can grow in containers, too. Let me teach you how. Call Carlin, 415-826-3127; carlinet@fastmail.fm; www.carlinsgardens.com. Carlin's Gardens—Your Nature Connection!

Vacation! Cabo! New three-bedroom, two-bath condo. www.vrbo.com/224562. Kent, 415-468-9400.

Charlie the Phone Guy: Residence, business, home office telephone wiring. Fax/modem lines, DSL, Ethernet, VOIP! Dead jacks brought back to life! Remodel planning. On-time appointments! Free estimates. Noe Valley resident. Charlie@sfphoneguy.com. 415-641-8410.

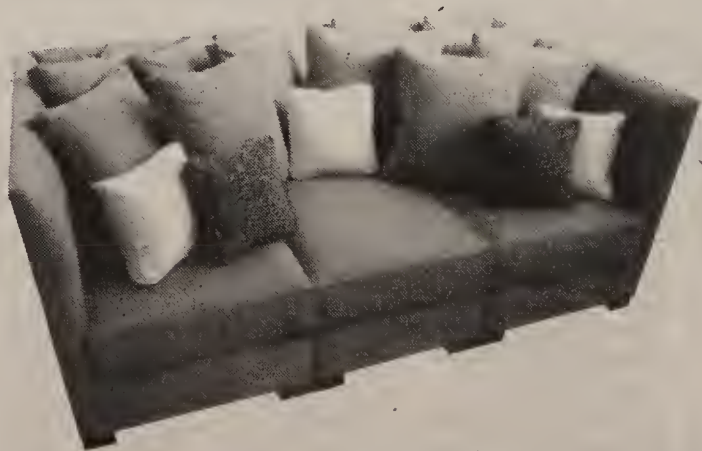
Piano Lessons in Noe Valley: Supportive, patient teacher with many years of experience. Lessons tailored to individual goals. Ear training, theory, classical or popular repertoire. Barbara Bennett, 415-648-1007.

Overwhelmed by Clutter? Closets? As featured on HGTV, NPR, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. ShipShape offers expert, simple solutions to what goes where. We cut through clutter, defrazzle moves, install closets, and restore simplicity and peace of mind to busy lives. Home, office, packing, closets, and more. 415-550-0658. www.shipshape.com.

Free Introductory Qigong/Tai Chi class session. Chris Sequeira offers a free introductory class in tai chi and qigong. Monday, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez; or Wednesday and Friday, 10:30 a.m. to noon, Glen Park baseball field, Elk & Chenery. Half-price discount for first month. Call 415-773-8185. Livingtaichi@yahoo.com. Livingtaichiprinciples.blogspot.com.

Attract Birds and Butterflies to your garden! Take simple steps to delight your senses and bring vibrant life to your yard. And birds eat lots of insects! I'll design and plant or show you how. Call Carlin, 415-826-3127; carlinet@fastmail.fm; www.carlinsgardens.com. Carlin's Gardens—Your Nature Connection!

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Tea Room



Please join us in our support for Haiti

Lovejoy's will donate 10% of February profits to Oxfam and Doctor's without Borders for their relief efforts in Haiti

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Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

Hatha Flow Yoga in Noe Valley. Saturdays, 8:15 to 9:15 a.m. Beginning/Intermediate class encourages healthy alignment, use of breath, and body awareness. Teacher is registered with Yoga Alliance and holds B.F.A. in dance from Juilliard. MoBu Dance Studio, 1605 Church Street at 28th Street. julie.yoga.class@gmail.com.

Cleaning Professional. 24 years experience. Apartments, homes, or offices. Roger Miller, 415-794-4411.



Your Trees are part of your investment, and part of your habitat. They deserve expert, quality care. Beautiful work and personal tree service by ISA Certified Arborist. Free estimates. Licensed and insured. Call Martin Arnest at 415-882-1109. Email: treepro@comcast.net; www.sftreepro.com. CA Lic. #829012.

Adriano Hauling & Cleaning: Need help? We can help! We love cleaning your yard, garage, and attic. We remove and dump any construction debris, appliances, new and old furniture, and much more! Need space in your garage or basement? Call us for a free estimate! Seven days a week! Ten years in the Noe Valley area. Call Adriano, 415-990-4062.

Catsitting at negotiable rates in Noe Valley and adjacent neighborhoods. Responsible, playful animal lover, 30-year Noe Valley resident, 10-year local catsitter. Return to a contented cat, a secure home, and a thriving garden. References on request. Lucy, 415-282-3676, lunaru9@aol.net.

Bed & Breakfast "Cottage Gate." Charming studio with queen bed, kitchenette, breakfast choices. Private entrance (no steps), bath, cable; 20th and Douglass streets. 415-626-6497. JimDiDL@aol.com. Photos at www.vacationrentals.com/vacation-rentals/10961.html.

PC Tutoring: Introduction to Windows, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Internet by a very patient community college teacher. Special offer: one and a half hours for \$45. 415-820-1670; cfebcom@gmail.com.

DogWalkingServiceOfSanFrancisco.com. 415-731-0120.

Telephone-Computer-Audio Jacks and wiring. Home entertainment, video surveillance-CCTV-telephone systems, intercoms. Sales, service, repair. Since 1999. BBB Lic. #796389. www.allwired.net. Kent, 415-468-9400.

CLASSES

Wallpapering and Painting. No job too big or too small. Services available: wallpaper installation, wallpaper removal, wallpaper repair, painting, wall prep—for paper or paint. Installation of all types of wall covering with attention to detail, and quality workmanship is always top priority. Discounts given on many major brand wallpapers. Free estimates. Call Susan, 415-810-2889.

Submissions: The *Noe Valley Voice* invites submissions of stories, poems, and essays. Email lastpage@noevalleyvoice.com or send manuscript, plus name, phone, and email, to *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you need your materials returned. Thank you.

Garden Cleanups and Makeovers. Is your garden sad and weary? Let us transform it to vibrant health and beauty! Carlin's Gardens—15 years in Noe Valley. Call Carlin, 415-826-3127; carlinel@fastmail.fm; www.carlinsgardens.com. Carlin's Gardens—Your Nature Connection!

Old House Repairs for walls, doors, windows, and floors. Assemblies, installations, renovations and more. Call on the experienced Victorian handyman specializing in plaster/paint repairs. Olivier, 415-786-4534.



Do You Need Housecleaning? We will do it. Just call Sara and Marco, 415-310-8838.

Piano Lessons. Specializing in theory, technique, and classical repertoire. Levels beginner to advanced. Member of the MTAC. Contact me, Heather Carothers, at 415-238-7714.

Tax Preparation and Planning Services for individuals and self-employed persons. Over 20 years of experience, especially in dealing with issues of artists, consultants, and non-filers. Free initial phone consultation. Please contact Alan Steger, Enrolled Agent, at 415-387-3057.

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Piano Lessons—Now Accepting Students. Experienced music teacher, having successfully taught piano to students of all ages for over 25 years. Reasonable rates for half-hour lessons either at my home or student's home. Call 415-875-9715 for more information and/or to schedule lessons.

Edible Landscaping. I will help you create an organic edible landscape or make one for you. No need to give up your flower beds—we can incorporate lovely and delicious food plants into your existing garden. Carlin's Gardens—15 years in Noe Valley. Call Carlin, 415-826-3127; email carlinel@fastmail.fm; www.carlinsgardens.com. Carlin's Gardens—Your Nature Connection!

Driver Available: Doctor appointments, grocery shopping, errands. Bill: 415-826-3613.

Stay in SF Short-Term Rental. Large, two-bedroom fully furnished flat in Noe Valley for vacation rental. Restaurants, coffeehouses, markets, transportation all outside your door. Sleeps six comfortably. Great for families! Daily, weekly, monthly rates available. No pets. No smoking. Leave a message at 415-309-4909 or email stayinsf@hotmail.com. For a look around, go to stayinsf.googlepages.com.

Transform Your Jungle into a Paradise. Twenty-three years in Noe Valley. Pruning, cleanups, maintenance, lawns, flagstone patios, irrigations, planting. Call Jorge at 415-826-7840 for free estimates. Remember this is pruning time.

Noe Valley Guest Quarters. Quiet, private, and clean. Sleeps two. Private entrance, firm queen bed, bath with shower, local television, wireless, efficiency kitchen for light housekeeping. Walk to 24th Street, Muni, and BART. \$100 per night, two-night minimum. kchwch@gmail.com.

Words Wanted: The *Noe Valley Voice* welcomes your letters, essays, and op eds on Noe Valley. E-mail editor@noevalleyvoice.com.

The Voice website

has news and photos from the current issue, and searchable archives dating back to 1996.

www.noevalleyvoice.com

Seeking Parking Space (open or covered) near Elizabeth/Sanchez. 202-966-0064.

Vacation Retreat for Noe Valleyans. Calistoga/St. Helena. Three bedrooms, two baths, sleeps six (maximum). Decks with view of stream, woods, and meadow. Fireplace wood supplied. 30 acres, trails, all-year stream. Dogs okay. Three-night weekend = \$500. Seven nights = \$900. Additional nights after seven = \$100. Discount for repeat guests. Photos at <http://spot02.googlepages.com>. 415-647-3052.

How to Place a CLASS AD

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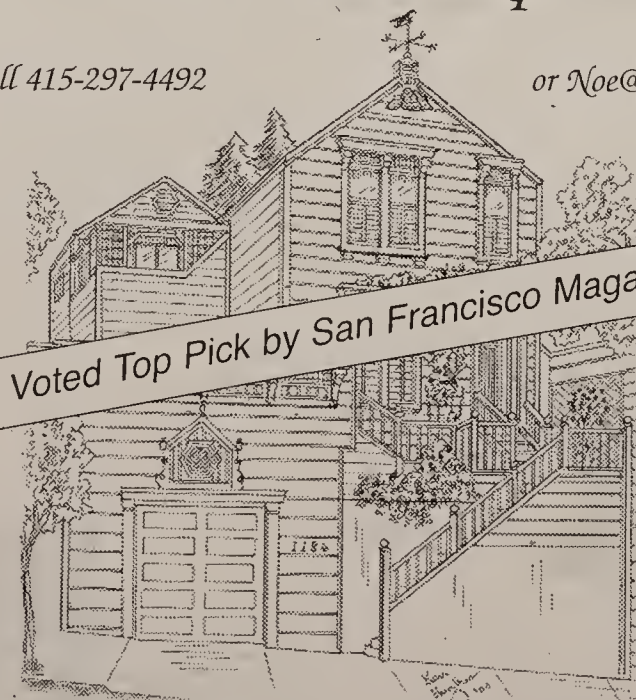
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New Mailing Address for the Noe Valley Voice

Dear Readers, Advertisers, Subscribers and Writers, friends all,

We haven't yet moved, from 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, but you could be among the first to grace our new post office box at 24th Street's Noe Valley station, where in a few months, all your "snail mail" will be directed.

We actually love letters (and checks) written by hand, placed in a paper envelope, with an often lovely stamp affixed. Remember sealing wax?

We're not suggesting a return to the 19th century, but not everything needs to be a digital/electronic communication. Write us a letter today. Slower can be fun!

The Noe Valley Voice
PO Box 460249
San Francisco, CA 94146

Supporting snail mail since a first-class stamp cost 13¢
THE NOE VALLEY VOICE



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FABULOUS CONDOMINIUM

This is a bright one bedroom condo located in Diamond Heights Village. This unit faces south, which provides great light and views. Kitchen has lots of cabinets and big counter, great for entertaining. This condo also has double pane windows, gas fireplace, walk-in closet and one car parking. HOA includes water, garbage and outside maintenance. Amenities include year round heated swimming pool, exercise room, pool tables, jacuzzi and sauna.

\$449,000



Dan McLean
415.850.7613

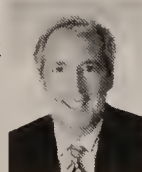


EXQUISITE HOME

This property is a stunning example of famed Palace of Fine Arts architect Bernard Maybeck. With a Tudorish exterior of shingles and steep, gabled roofs, and the exquisite reflection of the Arts & Crafts era within its gracious interior, this unique four level, four bedroom and three and one-half bath home is situated atop a landscaped knoll providing a sense of seclusion. This is a very rare opportunity to own acclaimed architecture in a storybook setting that provides for gracious entertaining and sophisticated living.

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Jim Laufenberg
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STUNNING CONDOMINIUM

Complete top to bottom Renovation! Open floor modern concept design. Top floor end unit with views! Open beam ceilings throughout. Expanded Chef's kitchen with custom wood cabinets, 16-foot of granite slab countertops and Energy Star stainless steel appliances. The kitchen also includes Bertazzoni oven/hood and a Bosch dishwasher. The bathroom is renovated with a double-wide sink and dual faucets. Glass mosaic tiles and a frameless glass shower surround the Bamboo flooring. This unit boasts a designer carpet, Solid core doors with nickel hardware, custom solar shades, and Elfa closet systems. FHA approved complex!

\$549,000



Jim Demourkas
415.377.7082

and now for the RUMORS behind the news

Noe Bashing

By Mazook

THE BIG BUZZ in Noe Valley last month was the online mayhem created by two stories in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The first article (Jan. 7), by freelancer Anna Marie Hibble, was provocatively titled, "Noe Valley: Only for Strollers Made of Gold." The second, published a week later by *Chron* columnist Robert Selna, had the news: "Blocks Hungry to Fill Storefronts with Eateries."

Hibble's piece talked about the high home prices in our neighborhood and our snobbish, entitled attitudes. According to Hibble, some non-Noe Valleyans are reluctant to come to the neighborhood because they fear "being shoved aside in the Cheese Shop by the more determined hand of a young mother intent upon that Dutch Edam sample for the mouth of her squalling child."

Selna covered the Planning Commission hearing on Jan. 14, and the current neighborhood debate over repealing limits on the number of restaurants, food-service, and to-go businesses that can open in Downtown Noe Valley (see Corrie Anders' front-page story).

You can see Selna's and Hibble's stories by googling "Noe Valley" or going to www.sfgate.com.

When you get there, scroll down to the bottom and see the hundreds of comments by readers (185 re stroller s and 294 re the food issue). Evidently, out there in the bl-

ogosphere, our quaint little hamlet is an object of scorn.

Don't get me wrong. There were many Noe Valleyans and others who came to the defense of the neighborhood.

But most comments ranged from just sarcastic to pretty ugly. Here's a sample:

"Noe = Neighborhood Overflowing with Easterners. Like many precious parts of the city, Noe Valley has become just another conversational bauble to flash for the carpetbagger clique that has infested SF."

Try this one: "Those huge baby SUV strollers are almost as obnoxious as the people pushing them."

How about: "I can only assume that the arrogant, elite, narcissistic, self-indulgent, overpaid, and functionally illiterate, selfish people who do not need to live in Noe Valley they simply like to associate with others like themselves."

Then there was: "This is the only neighborhood where women push baby strollers while talking on the cell phone and don't look both ways before crossing the street AND give attitude when someone calls them out for being so foolish. They expect everyone to stop. Sure, it's the law, but what about that one driver who is distracted?"

Someone else wrote, "Who the hell would want to live in Noe Valley? I grew up here and I had not heard of it until 1997. Wasteland as far as I'm concerned."

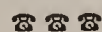
Another labeler called us "Snobaholic Anonymous [sic]."

This anecdote was a real zinger: "Around 1996, I was having a conversation with a building contractor who said he was turning down Noe Valley clients. I asked him why he didn't like the neighborhood. His reply: 'White mothers.'"

And then there was the comment hurled at this *Voice* columnist for being a "busybody," which I take as a compliment, by the way.

To echo longtime Noe Valley resident

former *Chronicle* writer and current *Voice* contributor) Tim Innes, "Does it mean you have arrived when you become an object of scorn? As for me, I've yet to be menaced by a latte-crazed, cell phone-yakking, stroller-pushing yuppie."



E-MAILS BOMBARDED Castro Street bookstore Cover to Cover last fall, when the shop was mentioned in another *Chronicle* story (Nov. 19), by Steve Rubenstein, headed, "Bay Area Not Mav-erick Enough to Read Palin Book."

Pointing out that there were no copies of Sarah Palin's book *Going Rogue* at Cover to Cover (among other independent bookstores) the week it was released, Rubenstein quoted Cover to Cover staffer Emily Stackhouse as saying, "Anything like that we wouldn't carry.... We're a small store and it would probably gross us all out."

Stackhouse says Rubenstein misquoted her on the "gross" part. "What I said was the reason we were not carrying the book was because we are a small store and that it wouldn't sell that well in our neighborhood."

"Oh boy," says Cover to Cover co-owner Mark Ezarik. "After that came out, we started getting e-mails from across the country, and some were very nasty, calling us things like 'book burners' and accusing us of censorship."

"For me, it was a business decision, not a political one," says Ezarik. "We would have been selling the book for \$25 when you could have picked up the book at a box store for as little as \$5."

At last count, the number of comments on SFGate.com on that story was 794.



BLOG JAMS, CONT'D: In December, I reported that SFGate.com had established a special Noe Valley blogspot last Sep-

tember, as part of its S.F. neighborhoods coverage. Well, the Noe Valley Blog has now gone "poof." All stories, including the most recent one about Whole Foods' opening (!), have been removed, along with the reader comments.

Says SFGate news director Vlae Kershner, "Yes, it has been disabled for the time being, and we are still looking for [freelance] bloggers."

Meanwhile, as you neighborhoodies know, Noe Valley has a plethora of alternative sources for blogging and tweeting—blogspots and websites to keep us moving down the information highway between issues of the *Voice*.

One place that has a ton of stuff is the www.everyblock.com site. There you can get Noe Valley news, real estate listings, permit applications, police incidents, etc., plus all the pictures locals post on the Internet. Everyblock now has started publishing "Valuepak" coupons, which Everyblock calls "local deals." Listed on Jan. 27 was a \$3 discount at Haystack, \$3 off a dinner combo at Hamano Sushi, and \$1 off any meat burrito at Casa Mexicana.

Another is the NoeValleySF blog (noevalleysf.blogspot.com), self-described as "a hyper-local guide to Noe Valley—with attitude." While somewhat snarky, the blog keeps the news coming and has a neighborhood posting wall.

An interesting item duped on NoeValleySF in January was a "Reader Rant: Dogs Need Places to Poo, Too." It generated 50 more rants and raves on Noe Valley doggie etiquette. Remember, there may be as many dogs in Noe Valley as there are children. OMG.

NVSF also linked us to the January *New York Times* story on the top 10 Netflix movie rentals for 2009 in zip codes in 12 major metropolitan areas, including San Francisco. The results for Noe Val-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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OFF**

OIL CHANGE

RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

ley's 94131 and 94114 should be no surprise: *Doubt* and *Milk* were at the top. Other Netflix hits in our zips were *Benjamin Button*, *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Rachel Getting Married*, *Burn After Reading*, and *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*.

The *Times* story prompted me to ask our neighborhood store Video Wave (on Castro above Jersey) to report on its top 10 movie rentals in 2009. Owner Gwen Sanderson says first-place honors went to *Burn after Reading*. Then came *Vicky Cristina*, *Slumdog*, *Rachel*, *Grand Torino*, *Doubt*, *The Reader*, *Milk*, and in ninth place, *Revolutionary Road*.

"Outside of those top Oscar titles, I would also include *Tell No One*, *I've Loved You So Long*, and *Let the Right One In*, all of which are remarkable foreign films," says Sanderson.

Also, we had high rentals of *Julie and Julia*, *Frost/Nixon*, *Pineapple Express*, and *He's Just Not That Into You*. The most wanted TV videos were *True Blood*, *Breaking Bad*, *Dexter*, and, of course, *Mad Men*.



HEINZ, HOSTESS & HAMBURGER HELPER: There is no doubt what the neighborhood thinks of our newest grocery store. The lines of customers at the checkout stands at Whole Foods on 24th Street have been long, healthy, and organic, from the minute the store opened Sept. 30. Says store team leader (manager) Melanie Holt, "Business has been very good, and this store is in the top five in California for sales per square foot." Holt adds there is especially high demand for "spices in jars, bread, bottled water, toilet paper, and cloth bags."

It would appear that since the arrival of Whole Foods, there also has been an uptick in business for other Noe Valley stores, including the venerable Shufat Market (24th and Church).

"Oh yes, for sure we have seen a rise in sales of many items," says Shufat's Omar Khalil. "The first that comes to mind is Progresso and Campbell soups, then Kellogg's cereals, Pepperidge Farm cookies, the original flavor A-1 steak sauce, lots of Best Foods mayonnaise, Folgers, and Taster's Choice coffee, and Stouffer's frozen dinners, and also much more Windex and Reynolds Wrap."

Could these possibly be items not found at Whole Foods?



STORED DRECK: At last count, Downtown Noe Valley had nine vacant stores. The owners of the storefronts that once housed Phoenix Books (corner of 24th and Vicksburg) and Streetlight Records (24th near Noe) want to sell their buildings, and each is asking over \$2 mil. The Real Food store has been closed, vacant, and not for sale or rent since 2003, and it seems it will remain so forever. The other retail stores for rent would be the space where GNC was; Riki's old space, where the owner has done some foundation and remodeling work; the space on Diamond vacated by Just Awesome Games; and of course the storefront across from Whole Foods just vacated by Artsake. The last two vacant spots are both restaurants, Bistro 24, which is closed and still for sale, and the spot where Mi Lindo Yucatan restaurant was. That space is currently under construction with a "For Rent" sign posted by Retail West. The *Chron* used a big picture of that sign to illustrate the aforementioned restaurant story.

The owner of the Artsake building, Joel Coopersmith, says he is willing to rent the

900-square-foot space for \$3,000. He says he has received "a couple of calls, one of which was a proposed nail salon."

As for the new restaurant space offered by the owner's agent Retail West, it appears that the construction will be finished by June and ready for occupancy, according to Retail West broker Matt Holmes.

"We have excavated and extended the ground floor back to the property line, increasing the 1,200 square feet to 3,000. The rent is based on \$4 per square foot, which adds up to \$12,000 a month. That may seem high," says Holmes, "but for restaurants in this city, the rent is only anywhere from 5 percent to 12 percent of the total [monthly expense]."

"We have had about 30 telephone calls inquiring about the space in the past few months, but what we are looking for is a restaurant that is chef-driven, which we find can be very successful," says Holmes. That could be said about any of the popular DNV dinner spots.



HAMSTRINGS & OFFSPRING: The store vacated by Cary Lane, next to Shufat Market, has been transformed into Cardio-Tone. The new place is offering a very Noe Valley combination of services: exercise programs and classes, and childcare on an hourly basis.

Store founder Rachel Aram and her husband moved to Noe Valley two years ago from Miami, Florida, where she was a CBS TV local news reporter. Before that, she was a fitness instructor.

"Since I have moved to Noe Valley, I have had two children and now started this business doing what I love to do. We have seven types of adult fitness classes and seven kids classes, and we provide childcare while the parents are taking their classes," she says. "We also provide hourly care if the parent or parents want to go shopping or out for a meal in Noe Valley."

The childcare providers are staffed by a licensed childcare agency, Wondersitter, and the hourly rates are \$6 when the parent is in the class, and \$10 when the parents are offsite.

"We chose Noe Valley, after looking all over the city, to live in and then looked at every empty store, and this was the place," she says, "and since we have moved here, we feel so much community support and how friendly everyone is."



HISTORY IN THE MAKING: Noe Valley's most prolific author, Bill Yenne, has been attending many book-signing parties these past three months. His newest release is a non-fiction book, *Tommy Gun: How General Thompson's Submachine Gun Wrote History*. Then there's *Convair Deltas: From Sea Dart to Hustler*, the true story of an airplane that made Air Force history, and a novel, *For God and Country* (written under the pen name of Jerome Prescott), about a military chaplain in Iraq.

Yenne, who settled in Noe Valley in 1974, will release in April yet another epic military biography, titled *Alexander the Great*. The foreword is written by retired Army general Wesley Clark. Yenne's book has also been favorably reviewed by John Negroponte, former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Negroponte describes Yenne's latest as "an excellent survey of Alexander's exploits and a vivid reminder that the geopolitical landscape hasn't changed that much over the millennia."

Says Yenne: "Alexander's empire was the largest the world had yet seen [in the fourth century B.C.]. It was nearly as large as the Roman Empire, which took two centuries to build to the point that it took Alexander to build in 12 years." Alexander died at age 32.

Although Yenne will not say exactly



A tribute to Helen Weinschenk sprung up in the window at Ambiance clothing store on 24th Street after employees learned that the former shopkeeper and cherished friend had died on Jan. 19.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

how many books he has written or compiled—we all have his *San Francisco Then & Now* and *San Francisco's Noe Valley*, and maybe even his recent hit *Sitting Bull*—he admits that the number is now over a hundred.



THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD is mourning the loss of one of our most beloved residents, Helen Weinschenk, who passed away on Jan. 19 at age 98. Helen and her husband Arthur moved to Noe Valley in 1949 and bought and operated a shoe repair shop called Mission Renewal, located where Ambiance is now. They lived in an apartment behind the store. Arthur died in 1964, and Helen continued on as the shop's cobbler until 1977, when she sold the business to Barry and Patti Wood, who renamed it the Wooden Heel. The shop moved to its current location on 24th Street near Castro in 1981, and the Woods sold the business in 2002. Helen worked at the Wooden Heel until retiring in 2004 at age 92.

Patti Wood describes Helen as "the kindest person you will ever know—she never had a bad thing to say about anybody. Her business ethic was, simply, the customer is always right."

Our neighborhood historian, Bill Yenne, wrote a tribute to Helen back in 2002. In it, he noted, "Some days it would

take Helen a couple of hours to walk the two and a half blocks from her apartment on 24th and Sanchez up to St. Philip's Church. It was not that she wasn't a fast walker—no, actually she was quite speedy (and a great line dancer). It was because, as Helen would say, 'When I walk down the street, there are so many people who wanna say hello.'"

Bye-bye, Helen. And ciao for now, Noe Valley.



Born in 1908, Helen Weinschenk was a longtime resident and proprietor of the Mission Renewal shoe repair shop, located at one time on 24th near Noe Street. Friends say she warmed the hearts and "saved the soles" of untold numbers of Noe Valley residents.

Photo courtesy Patti Wood

LETTERS to the EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, P.O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Or email editor@noevalleyvoice.com.

Please include your name, address, and phone number. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) Be aware that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity. We look forward to hearing from you.

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THE LAST PAGE

In December of last year, former *Noe Valley Voice* writer Erin O'Briant debuted her first novel, *Glitter Girl*, in a most modern way. Instead of putting out a paperbound book, she made the novel available free as an audiobook podcast on the website Podiobooks.com.

"I'd had some difficult dealings with the publishing industry, both in trying to publish this novel and some nonfiction work, and I was tired of waiting," says O'Briant of the unconventional route.

She first learned of online audiobooks from one of her San Francisco City College colleagues (she teaches full-time) and immediately liked the control it gave her over the publishing process.

"Publishing *Glitter Girl* this way gave me a sense of power, and the confidence that people actually do want to read this book," says O'Briant, 36. "Now, every time I check my email, I have another message from a *Glitter Girl* fan. It's such a thrill. It makes all those years of work-

ing on my novel worthwhile."

Subscribers to Podiobooks can download half-hour "episodes"—which sometimes include more than one chapter—onto their computers or MP3 players. O'Briant says she had some coaching before recording the book herself.

Glitter Girl is the story of two sisters, Gloria and Angie Soren, who at first seem as different as night and day. Angie is a born-again Christian and anti-abortion activist living in Georgia. Gloria, a San Francisco resident,

is a lesbian and freelance writer who has committed a cardinal sin: plagiarism. Unable to find work in her field, Gloria settles for selling glitter spray at Macy's.

Is the story autobiographical? "I was a glitter spray salesgirl in 2001," O'Briant confesses. She had returned to San Francisco after a stint in Atlanta, and couldn't find a job. "[Selling glitter spray] was a nightmare. I kept myself sane by writing down bits of dialogue."

O'Briant points out that she, like Gloria, is also gay, "but I'm

not a plagiarist!" she says with a laugh.

A former resident of Noe Valley, O'Briant now lives in Brisbane, Calif.

To download *Glitter Girl* or to find out more about O'Briant's work, visit her website at www.erinobriant.com. You can also become a fan of *Glitter Girl* on Facebook.com or follow her on Twitter.com at @erinobriant. There's also her good, old-fashioned email address: e_obriant@yahoo.com.

—Olivia Boler



Erin O'Briant

An excerpt from the novel

Glitter Girl

BY ERIN O'BRIANT

San Francisco. December, 2001

"Oh my God, I am totally kicking your ass in glitter spray sales and this is a very high-traffic area and that is just ridiculous." Tiffany, the counter manager, flounced Gloria's way.

Gloria nodded politely but could not smile. She pulled back her shoulders to ease the clench in her chest. Gloria hated being a Beauty Advisor.

"You've got to pull every customer, ask everyone to try the glitter spray. There's no reason for your sales to be this low. Also, your lipstick looks weird."

Gloria marveled, as she often did, that she worked for someone ten years her junior. Gloria, who had been courted by *Harper's* and the *New York Times Magazine*, now sold glitter spray for a living. Worse still, she worked for a cosmetics line so tacky and obscure that the sales people had to hustle their customers. Surviving work each day was a hard-won triumph over humiliation. And sometimes she lost.

While she worked, she repeated a silent mantra: "I'll only stay through Christmas. I'll find a new job at the beginning of the year."

Gloria checked her make-up in one of the many mirrors and fixed her lipstick. Good: the zit that had appeared on her forehead that morning wasn't showing through the layers of concealer.

Gloria resumed her post four feet in front of the escalator that deposited Macy's Christmas shoppers near the splashy pink and yellow Bourjois Cosmetics counter. Techno music blasted over the speakers, drowning out the Christmas carols playing in the rest of the store. Two other Beauty Advisors were spaced evenly on either side of Gloria. All three wore the regulation prune-colored V-neck shirts and gold lamé chokers with rose-shaped appendages. The shirt was too short for one girl, who was long and thin, but it fit the other's tiny body perfectly. Gloria's was a little tight.

Shivering in the draft from the open doors, Gloria held the can of spray in her hand and kept her index finger on the trigger. She hoped no one she knew would see her. To each woman who stepped off the escalator, she inquired, "Would you like to try some glitter spray in your hair?"

Gloria couldn't see the women on the escalator until they were about halfway down. When they came into her line of vision, she smiled at them. Their shoulders stiffened and they averted their eyes. Only the crazy or the uninitiated smiled back at her—some out-of-towners didn't know that if they tried some glitter spray, they would be cheerfully forced to buy it. Beauty Advisors could be brutal.

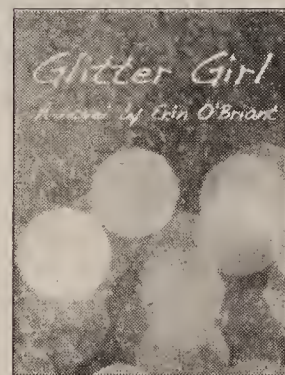
The shoppers marched out into the streets. They'd

do anything, it seemed, to get away from glitter-mongering Gloria. She understood the customers' reactions—she avoided panhandlers herself—but it hurt to spend the whole day being avoided.

All morning she repeated, "Would you like to try some glitter spray?" to each customer. To relieve the boredom, Gloria began asking customers, "Would you like to *test* some glitter spray?" She hoped the word "test" would sound more clinical and official than "try." It didn't work. "Come try some glitter spray," she ordered several women. The imperative didn't draw them, either.

Tiffany rolled her eyes at Gloria and grabbed a can of glitter spray. "Watch me." She jumped, grinning, out into a particularly dense throng and shrieked, "Try some glitter spray! It's fun!" Tiffany was always this enthusiastic; it was annoying and amazing. Her supervisor's youth might be some explanation, but Gloria wondered.

She watched as Tiffany paused, ducked her head, and quickly rubbed each nostril with the back of her left index finger. Then she sniffed. *No wonder she*



can't stand still. The gesture felt familiar; she'd probably seen Tiffany do it dozens of times without really noticing. Come to think of it, she'd seen the other Beauty Advisors sniffing and wiping their noses, too. Gloria looked over at the empty tissue dispenser on the counter. *So that's why we're always out of Kleenex. I work with a bunch of druggies.*

Tiffany straightened up and resumed her cry. "Try some glitter!" A couple of blonde teenage girls stopped. Tiffany sprayed them and then fawned over their sparkly hair. "It's so cute on blondes," she told them in a confidential tone, raking her acrylic fingernails through the yellow extensions in her bleached hair. "I just love mine for parties."

"How much is it?" the girls asked.

"It's \$18 for the can."

Gloria knew Walgreen's had a similar product for \$1.50. "You get 500 sprays per can. I think you definitely need some of this, you look great." Tiffany smiled, or something like it. Her eyes flitted about and the stench of aerosol lingered.

Gloria looked back at the escalator as Tiffany led her customers to the cash register. Just then an especially insensitive customer shouldered Gloria into the gift sets. Gloria staggered back against one of the tall makeup chairs and snagged her tights on a rough spot. She looked down at the new fist-sized hole the chair had ripped in her stocking. The sight of her pale skin through the jagged edges of black nylon was one degradation too many, and the tightening that was usually a prelude to tears clogged her throat. As Gloria tried to swallow them, Tiffany finished the sale and sidled over.

"You're going to have to do better than this."

As hard as she tried not to care about the job, her lagging sales made Gloria anxious. She liked to tell people at parties that she was a "recovering perfectionist," but she hadn't recovered much. Even with an emaciated, underage speed freak as her boss, even when an average day at her job was so awful that a hole in her stocking could make her cry, she wanted to succeed.

"I'll try, Tiffany." Gloria resolved to look as welcoming as possible.

"Would you like to try some glitter spray in your hair?"

"Would you like to *try* some glitter spray in your hair?"

"Would you like to try some *glitter spray* in your hair? It's really cute for parties." No one answered.

Finally a fifty-something woman wearing an angora sweater and a gold cross pendant agreed to try the glitter. Relieved to have a few minutes' break from the repetitive question, Gloria led the customer to a chair and spritzed the tiny metal flakes onto her hair. "Do you like it? I think it's really cute on you," Gloria lied.

The customer turned her head from side to side as she smiled at herself in the mirror. "It does look nice, doesn't it?" She sat up a little straighter.

Gloria looked at the wrinkled skin around the customer's eyes, her gold wire-rimmed glasses, the gray half-inch at the roots of her hair. Gloria's grin muscles began to twitch. "It looks fantastic. Sparkles are so flattering."

"Okay, I'll take a can."

"Great!" Gloria tried not to act surprised. "I'm sure you'll enjoy it."

The woman turned away from the mirror and squinted at Gloria intently.

Gloria's heart thudded. *Shit. Does she know me?*

"You could be really pretty, you know."

Thank God. Just the usual insults from a well-meaning older woman—Gloria could handle that. The woman continued, "Your face is a little round for that short hair, but you have nice eyes. I just love green eyes. Have you thought about growing your hair out? Are you a natural redhead?"

Gloria smiled. "Who's a natural anything these days?" She dashed off to ring up the sale before the customer could change her mind. After the woman left, Gloria wrote "\$18" on the otherwise blank sales log under her name. She experienced a shallow, fleeting combination of satisfaction and relief.

After the relative excitement of the sale was over, Gloria realized how tired she felt. She leaned for a moment on the counter. *Should I grow my hair? No, the in-between stage would look worse.* Gloria looked up to see Tiffany glaring. "If you have time to lean," Tiffany sometimes told the Beauty Advisors, "you have time to clean."

Gloria walked back to the front of the counter. After all, she didn't want to get fired. Again.

Excerpt printed with author's permission from *Glitter Girl* by Erin O'Briant. Available for free podcast at Podiobooks.com.

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